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The Shape of Things

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JOHN L. LEWIS'S RADIO REPORT ON THE state of the C. I. O. was an impressive document, both in the hearing and the reading. Its claim of an enrolment of almost three and three-quarter million marks the C. I. O. as the leading labor federation in the country. Its appeal for the cooperation of the working farmers places it squarely in the main stream of the American tradition. Its indictment of the violence that employers have used in their attempts to fight the C. I. O. is in no sense extreme, and despite instances of labor violence it places the emphasis where it belongs. Its bitter commentary on the police massacres in the steel strike and on the failure of the federal authorities to take any action or utter any protest is completely justified. It is only when Mr. Lewis turns to Mr. Roosevelt and the question of his neutrality in the struggle for labor organization that he chooses his ground badly. We feel that Mr. Lewis's real count against the President should not be that he has chosen to remain neutral in the labor struggle. The real count against him is that, through fear of middle-class hysteria, he failed to enforce rigidly the federal statutes under which the government should have proceeded against the steel companies and their arsenals. Real neutrality would have meant law enforcement; and, in the steel strike at least, that is what labor did not get. We do not regard the President's Labor Day message as an adequate answer. Nevertheless, despite the exchange of artillery fire between Mr. Lewis and the President, a genuine break between the Administration and the C. I. O. is unlikely for some time. Each needs the other too badly. And each knows it.

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THE SOVIET UNION'S NOTE TO ITALY FLATLY charging the Fascist government with responsibility for the recent submarine attacks on neutral shipping in the Mediterranean has injected a sadly needed note of realism into the discussions of "piracy." There has never been the slightest doubt about who the pirates really were. The Spanish rebels do not possess any submarines capable of waging the type of undersea warfare which has been carried on against Spanish-government and neutral ships in recent weeks. Germany has been playing too cautious a game with England to risk being involved in such a campaign. Italy, on the other hand, has cast off all pretense of non-intervention since the capture of Santander. While England would have preferred to

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avoid disclosing such ugly facts as the identity of the pirates, thirteen months of blind-man's-bluff diplomacy in the Spanish situation have shown its utter ineffectiveness in checking fascist aggression. Facing the threat of an illegal Japanese blockade of neutral shipping in the Pacific, the democratic powers must find a technique for collective action against irresponsible attacks on world shipping. This cannot be done by ignoring their source or pretending that they are wholly unrelated to basic fascist strategy. If we are to judge by past experience, the piracy will cease only if the democratic countries serve notice that their combined navies will protect neutral shipping wherever and whenever it is attacked.

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WE GREET WITH MINGLED SATISFACTION and regret W. R. Hearst's withdrawal of his proposed $35,500,000 bond issues, and the action of the SEC in letting him get away with it. It is good to know that Hearst bonds will not at present be offered to the public, but unfortunate that no test could be made of the specific charges contained in numerous protests filed with the commission. Under the present interpretation of the law the commission doubtless felt that it had no choice other than to permit the withdrawal. It remembered that an attempt last year to keep a broker by the name of Jones from withdrawing after the commission had smelled fraud was severely rebuked by the Supreme Court in a six-to-three decision. The six said such action would be an infringement of liberty comparable to the oppression of the Stuarts. The three, speaking through Justice Cardozo, answered quite aptly: "To permit an offending registrant to stifle an inquiry by precipitate retreat on the eve of his exposure is to give immunity to guilt, to encourage falsehood and evasion, to invite the cunning and unscrupulous to gamble with detection. If withdrawal without leave may check investigation before securities have been issued, it may do so thereafter. . . . The statute and its sanctions become the sport of clever knaves." The last sentence makes us think the learned judge may have had some prescience. Well, the commission undoubtedly felt it had to follow what was constitutional law. Let it be noted, what *was* constitutional law. It would be interesting to find out what *is* constitutional law on this subject, given a court that has since suffered a change of heart as well as a change of personnel.

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THE OUTCOME OF THE STUTTGART CONGRESS of Germans Living Abroad provides an object lesson in how to keep Nazis within the bounds of reason. The convention proceeded on the well-tried Hitler theory that if you ask for a foot you may get an inch, but if you reach out for a mile you can get it while your opponent recovers his breath. Ernst Wilhelm Bohle, of the Foreign Office, ordered all Germans living abroad to organize to combat "old liberal ideas"; plans were announced to add three "cultural attachés" to each of Germany's foreign embassies; and, to top it off, Foreign Minister von Neurath as much as dared foreign governments to interfere with Nazi propagandists. England has been all too lenient with the aberrations of Berlin statesmen, but this was too much. The London *Times* condemned the whole program of the congress, and the press was told officially that the British government stood behind "every word" of the *Times* editorial. And the Yorkshire *Post,* mouthpiece of Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, rhetorically inquired: "Could any impertinence be more naive?" As a result, von Neurath's *Diplomatische Korrespondenz* hastened to assure the world that the Stuttgart speeches were not intended to be provocative, the cultural-attaché notion was dropped completely, and Herr Goebbels himself wound up the conclave with a soft crunching of sour grapes. "There is no need for us to send special officials to London, Paris, or Washington," he concluded. "Members of the National Socialist Party abroad are the leaven of Germanism in the world." All this would be heartening if there were any sign that our own Secretary of State had profited by the demonstration. On the contrary he insists, over the protest of his own ambassador to Germany, on permitting an envoy to appear at the Nazi Party congress now in session at Nürnberg, thereby giving that eight-day tirade against democracy the official recognition of the American government.

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GRIM TALES FROM THE DEEP SOUTH KEEP popping up with an alarmingly increasing frequency. In Dallas, Texas, a minor reign of terror has been going on for the past eight or nine weeks, replete with kidnappings, blackjackings, and the traditional tar and feathers. In every instance—there have been twelve so far—the victim was an active labor organizer. George Baer, vice-president of the United Hat, Cap, and Millinery Workers' Union was attacked on a downtown street, kidnapped, and severely beaten. Another gang pounced on Herbert Harris and George Lambert, Socialist Party organizers, stole the film "Millions of Us," which they had been exhibiting, destroyed $700 worth of sound and motion-picture equipment, and carried their victims off for a tar-and-feather party on the banks of the Trinity River. Behind the terror is said to be the Dallas Open Shop Association, working hand in glove with the Dallas plant of the Ford Motor Company. Even more ominous than the source of this gangsterism is the sufferance, if not the connivance, of the Dallas police. So quickly did they announce that they had "no clues and are dropping the case," that Governor Allred, much to his credit, sent state rangers into the city to protect labor leaders and suppress mob violence. In New Orleans Henry Hermes, secretary of the Socialist Party local, was arrested for "attempting to incite a riot by distributing slanderous literature attacking our state and city government." He was held incomunicado for thirteen hours, only to be released on bond and practically delivered into the waiting arms of thugs who beat him unmercifully. A few weeks ago Michigan witnessed the creation of the first statewide Civil Rights Federation. Citizens of Texas and Louisiana can best combat vigilantism by following suit.

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IF THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT HAD SOUGHT to create a case against the Catholic hierarchy in Spain it could not have done better than to issue the pastoral letter recently prepared by the Spanish prelates now in fascist territory. In order to understand the letter it must be realized that it was addressed not to world opinion but to Catholic opinion, particularly in Europe, which has been increasingly critical of the role of Spanish Catholicism in the revolt. The European Catholic press has been disturbed by the undeniable evidence of terrorism on the part of the rebels and by the fact that the Catholic church in Spain was closely linked with the chief enemy of the church in Europe—the Nazis. The document itself is replete with quotations from the Catholic press protesting against the excesses which the so-called defenders of the church have committed. In the fanatical zeal with which the rebel prelates rush to the defense of the Franco regime is the most convincing evidence possible of the political commitments of the Spanish hierarchy. The moderate republican government of pre-revolutionary Spain is denounced with unholy vehemence, and considerable space is given to defending the use of violence in seeking to uproot this "Communist" regime. The outworn argument that the military struck just in time to head off a Communist revolution is repeated without an iota of evidence to support the contention. Incidentally, the document is dated July 1, which raises the interesting question of why it should now be published with a Vatican City date line, giving the wholly unjustified impression that the Vatican has recognized Franco. No such step has been taken, and if this internal squabble may be regarded as evidence, there is little likelihood that it will be taken.

*

THE BASIS OF THE WIDESPREAD RUMORS OF racketeering among the Spanish relief organizations was revealed by the State Department's figures on the amount of relief actually sent to Spain by the various agencies and the supplementary figures issued by the agencies themselves. It appears that all the groups have commendable records except the American Committee for Spanish Relief, a pro-rebel organization headed by Ogden H. Hammond, former ambassador to Spain. This organization, which was launched with a great splurge at a Madison Square Garden mass-meeting, is shown to have sent not a penny to Spain out of the $30,753 which it collected for war sufferers, and to have swallowed more than $25,000 in "expenses." In contrast, the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy and the Confederated Spanish Societies to Aid Spain, which have shipped $633,147 worth of foodstuffs, clothing, and medical supplies, have spent only $84,586 for publicity and administration, or 13 cents out of every dollar collected. The Medical Bureau to Aid Spanish Democracy has taken in $165,120 and shipped $119,353 worth of supplies to Spain at a cost of only $26,871—about 14 cents on the dollar. It is not without pride that we note that no group excelled the record established by *The Nation's* Food Ship, which—because of volunteer help—was able to dispatch supplies worth $25,550 at a total cost of only 3 cents on the dollar. On the basis of this accomplishment we challenge comparison with the American Red Cross.

*

MANY HEIRS APPARENT WILL DOUBTLESS BE mentioned for the Roosevelt succession between now and 1940. It is a fascinating game, because you can name anyone you wish, and who is able to refute you? Albert Warner of the New York *Herald Tribune* wrote a sensational story last week asserting that Mr. Roosevelt, in conversation with intimate friends, had put Senator Robert M. La Follette at the head of the list. To be sure, La Follette's nomination would enrage the Southerners and throw conservatives into a paralysis. To be sure, also, he is not a Democrat. And to be sure, finally, if Mr. Roosevelt has as much control over the convention in 1940 as he had over Congress in 1937, his efforts in a man's behalf might prove something less than an asset. Despite these objections, however, the rumor is not without a certain plausibility. We remember a similar story that Stanley High wrote for the *Saturday Evening Post* naming Wallace as the heir, and other stories naming Murphy, Earle, and McNutt. All such talk is idle except as a preliminary way of testing sentiment for a candidate. We hereby announce that our sentiment has been tested, and that of all the gentlemen so far named—including the President, for a third term—we lean toward La Follette. He comes closest to having progressive social views, a realistic feeling for the means to be used in accomplishing them, a sense of balance in politics, a militant background, and deep roots in the movements both for workers' rights and for farmers' security. We can think of no one who would make a better candidate for a farmer-labor party, or whatever its equivalent is likely to be in 1940.

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TOM GIRDLER MADE A POINT OF TELLING the world that he would not sign a union contract because if he did the next demand would probably be for a check-off of union dues. This concern for the pockets of his workers makes particularly interesting a device recently introduced in Republic Steel's Canton, Ohio, plant. Each "loyal" worker—particularly those induced by the strong arm of the state militia to leave the picket line and return to work—has been handed a card reading as follows: "I hereby subscribe $.... to help defray legal fees and expenses incurred by reason of employees' petition to Common Pleas Court for restraining order and injunction against the C. I. O. with respect to their unlawful interference with our right to go to and from our work. Date..... Signed....." The company's name does not appear on the card, nor does that of any other organization. But the employees are given to understand that they are expected to sign the cards; and the amounts they pledge are deducted from their pay—in other words, collected by means of a check-off. Girdler will smash unionism even if his workers have to shell out good money to do it.

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BROUN'S PAGE, WE ANNOUNCE WITH REGRET, will no longer appear in *The Nation*. Mr. Broun has neither resigned nor been dropped; he has merely moved. His reasons are his own and have not been vouchsafed even to us; but from occasional comments it seems safe to assume that they were substantially expressed in his article of last April 17 in which he attacked *The Nation* for pursuing a policy of "fair play" which permitted the use of its pages for criticisms of the President's Supreme Court plan such as had been contributed by Oswald Garrison Villard and Maurice Wertheim. In that article Mr. Broun rather cryptically invited *The Nation* to dispense with his services. We firmly declined the invitation. We liked Mr. Broun and his page, and we claimed for ourselves and our other regular contributors only the right we unquestioningly gave to him—free expression of opinion. The irony of Mr. Broun's disapproval was that he and we saw eye to eye on the court proposal—as well as on most other major issues; we differed from him only in believing that it merited debate and that the opposition had a right to be heard. This attitude continued to distress Mr. Broun. He contributed his page with increasing reluctance and irregularity; and now he has left us. We wish him well, but we shall watch his future progress with some misgivings; we suspect that the spirit of fair play may search him out and plague him in the pages of the *New Republic* as well.

The Attack on the Labor Board

MORE important than any of the speeches and statements about labor that were made over the Labor Day week-end by Mr. Lewis, Mr. Roosevelt, and Mr. Green is the controversy over a decision of the National Labor Relations Board. The case involved is that of the National Electric Products Corporation, which we discussed editorially two weeks ago while it was pending. The decision has called down upon the board the wrath of the employers, the A. F. of L., and the press, whose darlings both have become. There have been attacks on the board before this, notably by Senator Nye and Representative Rankin; there have been rumblings of discontent from the A. F. of L.; there has been a sustained campaign by big business and its press for the "revision"—that is, scrapping—of the Labor Relations Act: but the National Electric Products case has evidently been chosen as the strategic ground for the fusion of all these forces and the battle with the board.

What makes the case so strategic is that it subjects the Labor Board to the withering cross-fire of the war between the C. I. O. and the A. F. of L. If one examines the case only hastily and superficially, it seems to present such a tangle of confusion as to justify the bewilderment of the newspaper writers and commentators. The tangle lies in the fact that not only are two unions involved in this case—and both of them outside" unions—but also two governmental agencies—the Labor Board and the Federal District Court in Pennsylvania.

The sequence of events is somewhat as follows: The company, which manufactures electrical wire, cables, and other electrical products, and which employs about 1,500 men in its plant at Ambridge, Pennsylvania, had up to May of this year refused to recognize any outside union. During April and May a C. I. O. union conducted an intensive organizing campaign among the workers and claimed to have a majority. On May 20 and for a week thereafter it made several attempts to get the management to meet with the union for collective bargaining. The attempts failed. Meanwhile, however, an A. F. of L. union had approached the management and succeeded in holding conferences with it. A hurried organizing campaign took place in the factory, and on May 28 the company signed a closed-shop agreement with the A. F. of L. union. The C. I. O. union called a strike and shut the plant effectively. Late in June the plant was reopened pending a settlement of the case by the Labor Board. But late in July the A. F. of L. union, not content to await the decision of the board, asked the Federal District Court to compel the company to live up to its closed-shop agreement. The district judge complied and issued a decree calling for specific performance of the contract. On August 30 the Labor Board, after holding hearings, handed down a decision declaring the A. F. of L. agreement invalid because of the conditions under which it was obtained, stating that the decree of the District Court did not apply in a case where the Labor Board had been given exclusive jurisdiction by Congress, and ordering an election to determine which union was to be the legal bargaining agency.

The case is complex but by no means insoluble. The board, to our mind, has handled it with admirable fairness and shown skill in untangling its various strands. As far as the public is concerned, there are three basic questions that need answering. When each of two outside unions claims to be the bargaining unit, should the fact that one has already obtained a closed-shop agreement from the company change the usual procedure of ordering an election? Does the board have the power to examine the circumstances under which such a union has obtained a closed-shop agreement? What happens when the board's decision clashes with the decision of a federal district judge?

To see how clearly and adequately the board has answered these three questions one must read its full opinion. The board is not at all concerned with whether the company likes or dislikes a union. Its only concern is that the company should not translate its likes or dislikes into overt acts of persuasion or coercion. That is why the board did not let the fact that the A. F. of L. had already obtained a closed-shop agreement prevent it from examining the validity of this agreement under the Labor Act. It would have had to do the same if the union in question had been a C. I. O. union or a company union. In examining the validity of this agreement, the board had to find the answers to two questions. Was there actual

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persuasion or coercion by the company in inducing employees to join one union rather than another? Did the company ever have any evidence that the A. F. of L. union spoke for a majority of the workers?

The board's thirty-five-page opinion is packed with factual information in answer to both these questions. Those facts leave no doubt that there was collusion between the company and the A. F. of L. union to get around the Labor Relations Act. The company showed no interest in the A. F. of L. until the C. I. O. organizers claimed a majority, offered to show proof that they had it, and asked for a conference. Then the company officials conferred with the A. F. of L. representatives, while refusing to see any C. I. O. men. In talking with the A. F. of L. men they never once asked for evidence that the A. F. of L. union had a majority. They simply "believed" them. Here is an excerpt from the testimony of I. A. Bennett, the company's vice-president:

> Q. And you didn't think it was necessary to ask them to show any proof of that fact?
> A. They couldn't show me proof.
> Q. They couldn't show you proof?
> A. No.

As for the enlistment of membership in the A. F. of L. union, there was unchallenged testimony from one worker after another showing that the organizing was done on company time, that the company foremen took a hand in it, that the workers were told by the foremen and the superintendent that unless they joined the A. F. of L. union the company would lose business and they would lose their work, and that the notices for a union organizing meeting were run off on a company press, on company time, and with the knowledge of the company.

What further acts of persuasion and coercion one could ask an employer to undertake it is difficult to imagine. There remains, however, the question of the clash between the federal court and the Labor Board. On this too the case is clear. The Wagner Act creating the board gave it exclusive jurisdiction and power over unfair labor practices. Its orders, once handed down, were to be subject to review only by the Circuit Court of Appeals and ultimately only by the United States Supreme Court. The board does not claim to be the final judicial authority. As an administrative board its function is to interpret the Labor Act and settle conflicting claims under it. Like those of other administrative boards, its functions are quasi-judicial; in so far as it deals with judicial matters its findings are expressly made subject to review by the Circuit Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court.

A final word about the social logic of the attack on the Labor Board. The A. F. of L. has launched an intensive campaign to undercut the organizing activities of the C. I. O. The fact is that it does not have anything like the mass response and the mass support among the industrial workers that the C. I. O. has. Its technique has therefore increasingly become that of collusion with employers, who prefer the lesser evil of the A. F. of L. to the greater evil of the C. I. O. The present case is a beautiful instance of how this collusion operates. And the great sin of the Labor Board, in the eyes of William Green, Dan Tracy, the business interests, their lawyers, and their journalistic supporters, is that the board, by pursuing strictly its judicial and administrative duties, has upset their apple-cart.

Anti-British Hysteria

IN the past few weeks there has suddenly arisen in certain circles a suspicion of British foreign policy which is almost hysterical in intensity. It is epitomized in the catchy title of Quincy Howe's new book, "England Expects Every American to Do His Duty," but its intensity requires a more fundamental explanation than is to be found in his pages. A certain amount of anti-British feeling has existed in the United States from the Revolution down to modern times, as was evidenced, for example, by Mayor Thompson's antics in Chicago. The Nye investigation increased the suspicion, already existing, that England inveigled America into the World War to save its imperial interests. But even at the height of the Nye committee's activities, feeling against England did not approach its present strength.

The weakness of British foreign policy during the past few years has undoubtedly contributed to anti-British sentiment. While it may seem inconsistent that Americans, whose own country has been the chief offender in undermining the mechanism for collective security, should berate England for its failure to support collective action against Japan in 1931 and its vacillation on oil sanctions in 1935, this is precisely what has occurred. Americans are firm believers in the collective system as long as the United States is not involved. Similarly, Britain's failure to support democracy in Spain has created a very bad impression in this country although the application to Spain of our neutrality law has aided the rebels precisely as has England's non-intervention policy. Distrust of British policy was increased, moreover, by the stupidity and callousness with which the Cabinet handled the abdication and marriage of Edward. And the American public has taken even less kindly to the aloof Chamberlain than to the moral Baldwin. There is a widespread feeling, which the new Prime Minister has done little to alleviate, that the present British government may ultimately land on the side of Hitler.

To what degree these specific items in British policy account for the present antagonism toward England is hard to say. Quincy Howe gives very little space in his book to a detailed analysis of England's shortcomings and a great deal to the vague assertion that the British Empire is consciously looking to the United States to pull its chestnuts out of the fire. This interpretation of British policy is being freely applied to the Far Eastern crisis. Opponents of collective action are saying either that it is useless for the United States to consider taking action in the Orient, since Britain will not cooperate, or that this country should be wary of positive measures because Britain is only trying to use us to prop up its own interests in the East.

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Nothing could be more unfortunate than that this distrust should serve to prevent cooperation between the two countries when the closest unity of action is essential. It is probably true that Great Britain would like to see the United States assume the leadership in any measures that are taken to curb Japanese aggression. But it is equally obvious that the United States would be only too gratified to see England bear the onus of action against Japan. Essentially, the interests of the two countries—economic, political, and social—are identical as far as China is concerned. The fact that a measure which served to check Japanese aggression would also be of assistance to Britain is by no means a convincing reason for refusing to cooperate in support of the Nine-Power Pact—which is very largely an American document.

Housing and Mr. Ickes

SECRETARY of the Interior Ickes, in a letter to the editors published elsewhere in this issue, takes us to task for saying that to place the federal low-rental housing program under the control of his department "would seem to assure, in view of the department's record in recent years, that no houses will be built for many months to come." *The Nation* admires Mr. Ickes's unquestioned honesty, his good intentions, and—even if we are the victims—his trenchant phrasing. But we still maintain that the record of his housing performance has been a public scandal.

He was appointed head of the Public Works Administration in July, 1933, with $123,000,000 at his disposal for slum clearance and public housing. Soon afterward he announced that the federal government would undertake housing projects only "where no properly constituted housing authority exists," and that local agencies would "be utilized to the fullest extent possible in the acquisition of sites, design, construction, and operation of projects." In line with that policy he wired Mayor LaGuardia in January, 1934, that $25,000,000 was earmarked for use by a New York City Housing Authority in constructing an initial project. In a month the New York City Housing Authority, with an unquestionably competent personnel, was organized and ready to do business. Similar authorities in other cities were hopefully set up.

But instead of following this sound policy Mr. Ickes suddenly reversed himself. Everything, it developed, had to be done not only through but by the PWA. Soon even the smallest detail of housing business in the PWA office became enmeshed in a tangle of checks and counter-checks that tied the whole program into knots. Mr. Ickes leaned over backward so far to keep his skirts clean that forward motion was all but impossible. Local authorities were scarcely even consulted. A number of them resigned or faded away because they had nothing to do. In New York a semblance of consultation remained, but only when it was found that the New York powers of condemnation had to be used to acquire property. A succession of heads of the PWA Housing Division testified to the administrative confusion: Kohn, Hackett, Clas, and now Gray. With these constant changes in personnel, numerous reorganizations of the Housing Division, earmarkings, allocations, allotments, and budgeting of funds for housing purposes, years elapsed before any construction even got under way. And in other cities PWA direction was if possible even less effective.

Caught in this morass of centralized bureaucracy, Mr. Ickes found he could not move fast enough to spend the funds available. He lost most of the $450,000,000 earmarked by Congress in April, 1935, when it was found the WPA could use the money more effectively for work relief of various sorts. But worse than the delays have been the costs of centralized authority. Building prices went up 25 per cent while PWA was going through the complex motions of the housing take-off. Because of its ignorance of local conditions and its needlessly elaborate specifications, contractors jacked up their estimates 10 to 20 per cent when bids were finally called for.

As a result a public housing program that might have given us an additional billion dollars' worth of low-rent housing in four years has succeeded in producing only about one-quarter of that amount. Not until this summer did the first low-rental project of any size open its doors in New York City—four years after Mr. Ickes's telegram to the Mayor; and that project was built not by the local authority as Mr. Ickes promised but by PWA itself. So it has been with all the other projects. Faltering and cumbersome administration has allowed only $134,000,000 of public housing money to pass through the PWA bottleneck so far; for fifty-one projects in thirty-eight cities—all built directly by the PWA. Administration and construction costs, of course, have risen to heights almost as scandalous as if they had been the result of graft instead of an over-exacting and jealous conscience.

So much for the past. The Wagner-Steagall bill, considerably mangled in the process of its passage, has now become law through the President's signature. Mr. Ickes has had his way. The new federal Housing Authority will be in his department, but under the direction of a housing administrator appointed by the President. As a result of excessive PWA spending, rigid limits—$1,250 a room in larger cities—have been placed on construction costs. The financial provisions will probably allow for only $500,000,000 worth of housing in the next three years. Slum clearance is too closely related to new construction, and the requirements for local financial contributions may slow up or even prevent some projects. The best part of the act is its denial of any direct federal power over the construction or operation of projects; local self-government in housing is now compulsory by law. And to Mr. Ickes's credit be it said that he advocated this policy himself at the hearings on the bill. At the very least a permanent housing program is now assured—one which with all its defects is sound in principle. For Mr. Ickes the act is a challenge which we hope he will eagerly and aggressively accept.

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Tammany's Last Stand

BY MAX LERNER

THE political game is dirty and exciting wherever it is played. In America it is a national passion, but in New York City it affects the very fabric of living. New York has contributed three items to American culture: Wall Street, Broadway, and Tammany Hall. Wall Street has been under a shadow since 1929; Broadway has become a suburb of Hollywood; and now every sign points to the passing of Tammany Hall and the collapse of the most powerful urban political structure in history. There is a smell of decay in the air, and you can already hear the crash of falling timber.

Tammany, like every urban political machine, has always been a vast feudal structure, with its hierarchy of leadership linked by subinfeudation and homage. Always it has presented a monolithic mass to its enemies—a mass rotten and corrupt but at least unified in its corruption. This Tammany is now a house divided. In a political machine, where you must hold your mass following by loyalty rather than intelligence, disunion is fatal. For it confronts the rank and file with a choice; to choose you must think, and once the submarginal mind of the party hack starts to work, he is lost.

What has happened to change the shape of things for Tammany? Most people would answer: the sequence of scandals during the last decade and the lack of leadership in handling the shock of them. It is true that Charles Murphy's successors have been puny men, incredible blunderers, bewildered before the onrush of events. But the scandals, ending in the flight of Jimmy Walker in 1932, the fiasco of O'Brien and McKee, the victory of LaGuardia and the Fusion movement in 1933, are by no means a novelty in Tammany's history. Tammany has a theory for such obscure matters as waves of reform and the fall and rise of public wrath. Once every generation, says this Tammany theory of history, a sort of eruption takes place, but it's a good thing it does. It gives Tammany a breathing-spell; it lets the reform mayor do the dirty work of increasing taxes, cutting expenses, replenishing the treasury. Then Tammany sweeps back again, ready for the fatted calf.

But this time the Tammany law of history is obviously not going to work, and Tammany men are bewildered. In their dull, primitive way they personalize their plight and blame it on particular devils—on Roosevelt, on Farley, on LaGuardia. Actually they are being defeated by the drift of our economic life.

Manhattan, the stronghold of the Hall, no longer occupies its old place of dominance over the other four boroughs of Greater New York. In 1920 it had 40 per cent of the registered voters; today it has only 25 per cent. In the interval industry and population have been shifting—to Brooklyn, which is now larger than Manhattan; to the Bronx, which is slightly smaller. And while the old Tammany is still in control of Manhattan, the New Deal Tammany—the Flynn-Farley-Kelly outfit—is in control of the other four boroughs.

To understand how they gained this control one must remember that a fully developed capitalism must get rid of its cruder Tammany Halls. For one thing, they are incompetent to handle the problems of depression subsistence, which have become chronic with capitalism. For another, they are too expensive, and the heavy burdens they add to taxation are no longer compensated by the franchise favors which the corrupt city machines gave the corporations in the earlier days. The depression made Walker's and O'Brien's efforts at government wholly pathetic. Municipal bonds fell in value, and the alliance between Tammany and the downtown bankers was loosened. The old ham-sandwich methods of buying votes, moreover, were futile in the face of widespread desolation. Only federal funds could deal with hunger, and the WPA, rigidly administered from Washington, made the precinct and district leaders seem archaic. In the deepest sense it is the depression that has delivered the knockout blow to Tammany, and it is permanent depression as a phase of capitalism that is likely to keep it knocked out.

Under such conditions a city machine that is on the outs with the national administration cannot last. It has been Tammany's big mistake not to see that truth. The two-cent Tammany leader, living in an atmosphere of the most primitive social consciousness, with a vision bounded by the clubhouse and the parish church, regards the New Deal as a transient whim or a passing trick of fate, and the C. I. O. as the contrivance of Communists. He lives, like the émigrés, in the constant hope of counter-revolution, and like them he thinks it can be accomplished by the old methods. His slightly brighter brothers may, however, see the need for adapting the old dominance to new conditions. Hence the split in Tammany, and the ruinous primary contest between the diehards running Copeland and the New Deal bosses running Mahoney.

The leaders backing Copeland are the Sullivan-Marinelli crowd. Ever since Murphy's death the Tammany leaders have been like a group of Chinese war lords, concerned only with plunder and personal suzerainty. Sullivan is perhaps the weakest leader Tammany has ever had. Technically his business is real estate; actually he is a race-track hanger-on. A lower East Side district like Sullivan's generally costs something like $25,000 to $30,000 a year to run. Some of it is made up through levies and "socials"; where the rest comes from is part of the dark forest of politics. Sullivan's own hold on his district is precarious; rumors are that he is in danger of losing it

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to Aaron Neiberg, a big Hungarian undertaker on Ludlow Street. As for Marinelli, who controls Sullivan, he has a sort of animal cunning within a limited mentality. Their present course in supporting Copeland is clearly suicidal, at least as far as the Democratic primaries are concerned; for Copeland stands not the slightest chance outside Manhattan. Behind Copeland, who has entered both Republican and Democratic primaries, is a combination of Smith-Raskob-Hearst Liberty Leaguers which embraces both parties with an inclusive hug. Money is pouring in freely from these sluices for the Copeland candidacies in both primaries. It was this golden flow that kept the Sullivan-Marinelli crowd from withdrawing Copeland when Grover Whalen withdrew in favor of Mahoney.

The best that can be said for Candidate Copeland is that he is a good soldier. When Senator Wagner refused to run, Copeland stepped dutifully into the breach. His qualifications were obvious. He had once been Mayor of Ann Arbor, Michigan; he was a doctor who had built up a large personal following by his health columns in the Hearst press; he was considered a great vote-getter, having been elected to the Senate three times; he was a bitter opponent of the New Deal. Dr. Copeland has worked hard on his career, and, as Senators go, he does not lack intelligence. He might have been a good doctor if he had not become a quack Senator. What he lacks is moral fiber. His whole political career has revealed in him a cunning in serving his masters, the vested interests of business and politics, combined with an abject lack of self-respect. His clinging to Hearst, his tenderness toward the patent-medicine interests in his food-and-drug bill and his paid broadcasts on a Fleischmann's Yeast program at the very time the bill was being considered, his glossing over of the shipowners' guilt in his committee report on the Morro Castle disaster, his attempt to put through a "fink book" system for the maritime workers; his demagogic attacks on Rosevelt and the labor movement—these give some notion of the man's stature. His only mass support is likely to come from the clubhouse and the swastika—from the Manhattan Irish and the Yorkville and Queens Germans. He is the natural candidate of the Germans, not only because of LaGuardia's anti-Nazism and Mahoney's stand on the Berlin Olympics, but because Copeland's own anti-labor views and his promises to use police repression in strikes endear him to the Nazis. Fritz Kuhn came out openly in support of him, and Copeland's mistake was to wait a week before repudiating the support. The report is that he is slow at mathematics.

Candidate Jeremiah T. Mahoney is decidedly the more refined type of Tammany leader. He has, at least, a personal appeal of a sort—a big, craggy, impressive human specimen, in excellent physical shape, with a pleasant smile and a decisive manner of speaking. A law partner of Senator Wagner, he caught by contagion a trace of the Senator's liberalism, but only a trace. As President of the A. A. U. in 1935 he led the movement for non-participation in the German Olympics. He lost the fight to Avery Brundage, but the fiasco of the games restored him to the presidency this year. Yet no sooner was he elected than he appointed Brundage, the Naziphile, chairman of the crucial foreign-relations committee. So completely does the politician in him dominate the liberal.

Mahoney's most vendible quality as a mayoralty candidate now is his reputed appeal to the Jewish vote because of his Olympic stand—an appeal that he underlined at the beginning of his campaign by addressing a Jewish audience in Yiddish. But his most enduring quality as a politician is a knowledge of what the traffic will bear in machine politics. It is unlikely that he would ever lend himself to the more brazen corruptions of the Walker regime; yet it is he and Flynn who must be held responsible for the stupid handing of a juicy political plum to Jimmy Walker two weeks ago. The truth is that while it campaigns under a New Deal banner, the Farley-Flynn New York machine is one of the more unlovely aspects of the Administration. Mahoney himself, a child of Tammany to the bone—in fact, much more so than the Tammany candidate, Copeland—has been cast by the ironic logic of events in the role of an anti-Tammany crusader, and the part just doesn't fit him.

LaGuardia is by all odds the outstanding personality in the history of the New York mayoralty. A mercurial and omnivorous mind, an uncontrolled temper, a brilliance as speaker and administrator, an incredible flow of energy, a genius for making the everyday dramatic and for turning the resulting drama to the uses of every day—these are some of his qualities and possessions. He has packed four or five careers into one. And always he has been an insurgent in ideas and a political polygamist in his party relations. A child of the many-tongued East Side, he has acquired and discarded party labels as easily as he has mastered languages. He has been Republican, La Follette Socialist, Republican again, Fusion, and Labor.

His 1933 election had a curious effect on the two parties which voted him into power. The Republican Party in the city is as much a machine as Tammany, only it has had exclusively lean years and is therefore all the hungrier. The clubhouse boys licked their chops when LaGuardia came to power. They saw in him a reform mayor who had gone through the ordeal by fire in practical politics. When they found that he really meant to refuse them jobs, they were stunned; and when, adding insult to injury, he called them a bunch of "clubhouse loafers," their anguish had no bounds.

There are at least four attitudes toward him now among the Republicans. One is that of the silk-stocking Park Avenue group, who hate him as they hate Roosevelt. The less obsessed members of the group, like Ogden Mills, have a special variant of this attitude. LaGuardia, says Mills, promised him in 1933 in return for Republican support that he would keep out of the national political picture; and Mills feels he has broken his promise. The second group is the clubhouse gang, led by Crews of Brooklyn, Ashmead of Queens, and Knewitz of the Bronx. Their hope and their disappointment are alike purely predatory. In the third group are the practical politicians like Simpson of Manhattan. Simpson has played a shrewd game. He held off from too early a commitment on LaGuardia in order not to alienate his

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followers, and then he stole a march on the Mayor and presented him with the *fait accompli* of a list of Republican names—McGoldrick, Morris, Isaacs—in addition to his own. It was a bold stroke and it worked. Simpson's aim is to put in the Republican column the best vote-getter in the city; to prevent the return of Tammany while the Republicans are building their strength; to use the Labor Party as a corrosive for eating away Tammany's mass base; and, not least, to get safe men elected to the state Constitutional Convention, which will have great importance for the future of New York politics. Then there is a fourth and final Republican group which supports LaGuardia squarely in the name of good city government. These are the progressive Republicans typified by Samuel Seabury and William Chadbourne. They are a curious lot: some are business men or *rentiers;* others are lawyers, torn between civic nobility and corporation fees, clinging finally to good government.

If you consider that the left wing of LaGuardia's support in 1933 was the City Fusion Party, and that today it is the American Labor Party—and, more negligibly, the Communists—you get a way of appraising the new base of progressive political action in New York. The City Fusion Party was never a real party. It did yeoman's work in electing LaGuardia in 1933, but it was never more than a mechanism whereby independent Democrats, progressive Republicans, stray Socialists, and mugwumps of all kinds could rally to his support. As soon as the election was over, it began to disintegrate, and it is not unfair to say that it is now scarcely more than an emblem on the voting machine. If LaGuardia had to rely today on the kind of support that elected him in 1933, he would be wise to dust off his lawyer's shingle. That is what happened to Seth Low and John P. Mitchell. But it is not going to happen to LaGuardia.

Why? The answer is generally given in terms of racial groups: he has the support of the Jews, Italians, Negroes, etc. That answer, despite its supposed realism, is to me superficial. Why does he have the support of these groups? If you could get the Jewish vote by consigning Hitler to the Chamber of Horrors, or the Negro vote by appointing a Negro magistrate or making speeches in Negro churches, politics would be a sweet and lovely pursuit. I am not saying these things are unimportant, but their importance is imbedded in a larger context. That context is the achievement of a social program by the city administration, the creation of a progressive climate of opinion throughout the city, and the confident welding of labor into a disciplined and mobile mass political organization. That is what separates 1937 from 1933; that is what distinguishes LaGuardia from Mitchell and breaks the taboo on the return of reform administrations; that is, finally, what gives LaGuardia a vote of over 60 per cent in the New York *Post* straw poll.

LaGuardia is primarily the candidate of the American Labor Party. His place on the city Fusion column is a residue, and any place he may get on the Republican column will be an accident. But his connection with labor is integral. His great strength will lie in the industrial boroughs—Brooklyn and the Bronx; in Manhattan, although labor is still under Tammany dominance, the Labor Party is beginning to break through. His weakness will be where labor is weakest—in Queens and Richmond.

It is not that militant labor has any illusions about LaGuardia. Under stress he would use, and has used, repression in labor disputes. He has handled the relief problem and relief delegations with an intolerant assurance. He is as capable of red-baiting, given the right provocation, as the next man. And yet, once phrased, these objections have a strangely academic sound. Labor has no desire, in a period of intense organization, to be merely a protest group. It is following the policy of effective political action—of getting as much and as good housing, schooling, sanitation, wages, and working conditions as it can get. It wants to pick its direction and move forward as fast as the objective conditions will allow.

I go along with this position, but I am aware of the dangers implicit in it. The habit of opportunism and compromise is not an easy one to shake off, even when the chance for decisive social transformation really arrives. And the case of Tom Dewey raises the question of where labor will set the limits of its support. Dewey knows little about labor. He made his reputation by exposing rackets, among them labor rackets. He performed a necessary surgical operation, but many honest labor people feel he was unnecessarily hard on the patient. The Labor Party's decisive support of Dewey's candidacy for district attorney was strategically wise: it served notice to the world that only honest and militant unionists were wanted in the party. And yet as far as Dewey himself is concerned, his vision of labor is thus far bounded by his experience with the racketeering unions. He is young and may learn—and again he may not. That is a gamble the Labor Party is taking.

There is one final danger. Labor is not entering into politics in any goo-goo spirit of reform. It wants results in social terms; it knows also how to act in realistic terms. I have talked with reporters in New York who have been following Tammany for years, and they tell me that the labor people do not suffer from comparison in tough-mindedness with Tammany. In fact, there is an inverted sentimentality in Tammany—the sentimentality of sticking to an underworld code—which labor lacks completely. Its leaders should make skilful politicians: they have been educated in the task of bargaining over concrete issues with tough-minded employers. The trade union, moreover, furnishes a superb cadre for political organization. The experience of getting out the Roosevelt trade-union vote in Chicago and New York last year showed how easily a shop chairman or business agent could be turned into something approaching a district leader. One of the lessons of the municipal campaigns will be the superiority of the trade union as a party base over the Tammany type of geographical organization.

One need scarcely point out how dangerous are these nettles from which labor must pluck the flower of strength. Labor will succeed in ousting Tammany. But in the process it must use enormous self-discipline. Labor wants no more Tammanies, not even labor Tammanies.

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Toward a Bigger Little Entente

BY M. E. RAVAGE

Prague, August 15

NOTHING so well illustrates the new disorder in the Danube valley as the present status of the kingless kingdom of Hungary. For the better part of two decades this aggrieved and pugnacious remnant of the Hapsburg empire has been bullied and held down by its encircling neighbors. Today these same heirs of the Dual Monarchy's Magyar crownlands, or at any rate two of them, waft smiles and discreet kisses over the frontier at the hereditary foe. In theory, to be sure, Budapest remains what it has been all along for the capitals of the Little Entente—the potential disturber of things as they are. In practice, Belgrade and Prague have for some time been engaged in the keenest rivalry for Magyar favor, while Bucharest has been sitting uneasily on the fence, observing the contest with a watchful eye and ready to tumble to the side of the winner. The issue, unless I am much mistaken, is one of those that will determine whether Europe is to be restored to tranquillity or to speed on toward disaster.

The most Occidental nation of the three, the Czechs are politically an intelligent and adroit people. But their realism in the present confusion derives as much from necessity as from native wit. Heirs of a highly industrialized economy, surrounded by enemies or doubtful friends, menaced from within and without by the new "dynamic" Germanism, they have been perforce the first in the Danube basin to perceive that unless some semblance of unity be restored to the region, all its peoples alike are doomed to economic ruin and political annihilation. Hence Mr. Hodza's plan for "a widened Little Entente," which—comprising in addition to the existing group Hungary, Austria, and Bulgaria—would recreate the vanished *imperium* of the Hapsburgs. The Premier of Czecho-Slovakia is too much alive to the mistrusts and suspicions which for ages have divided Central Europeans to be over-sanguine. For the present, he tells me, he is thinking of nothing more ambitious than a kind of *Zollverein* among the six countries. That would perhaps not solve all the problems, but it would suffice as a beginning. By promoting their prosperity, it would render the little states less exposed to the intrigues of their colonizing neighbors, and thus contribute to the maintenance of peace. Some sort of political consolidation might follow later. The project might eventually even be extended to Poland and to the countries north of it, thus giving birth to a veritable Central European confederation.

For this conception to materialize even in its initial phase much will depend on the good-will and the realistic good sense of the men who govern in Budapest, as well as in London and Paris. The Czechs are disposed in the common interest to make serious concessions, including territorial ones, to Hungary. In return they ask but one thing—that the question of Magyar rearmament, which Prague is prepared to concede in principle, be determined by the civilized method of negotiation by all the interested parties instead of in the unilateral surprise fashion made familiar to us of late by the Wilhelmstrasse. From my conversations with Tibor Eckhardt I carried away the clear impression that the leader of the Peasant Party—who, should the Budapest Parliament vote the proposed revival of the secret ballot, may well head the next government of Hungary—is not unfavorable to the Prague overtures. A keenly intelligent man, he has long since left behind him his fascist beginnings and is profoundly disquieted by the progress toward disaster which his country, tied economically to Germany and politically to Italy, has been making. Mr. Hodza, fresh from his Coronation visits to London and Paris, spoke to me in optimistic tones. The French, he says, have all along been favorable to close cooperation, political as well as economic, among the little states of Central Europe; the great stumbling-block has been the passive indifference of the British. Now London has at last awakened to its vital interests in the Danube basin and is ready to do its share toward preventing the region from falling a prey to the intrigues of Rome and Berlin —at least to the extent of not insisting, in its commercial relations with these states, upon most-favored-nation treatment. Ex-Chancellor Renner of Austria confirmed this view of the British position by quoting to me from an English statesman's speech this perspicacious sentence: "We have learned from unpleasant recent experience that the Suez Canal can only be defended from the Danube."

All this notwithstanding, there are reasons for suspecting that the Prague project will encounter many a snag in its path. To look for approval from the neighboring great powers one would have to be exceptionally naive. Moscow, I daresay, will make no difficulties. The Soviet Union may be ruled by a dictatorship, but it is not a land-hungry power, and should rather welcome a barrier between itself and the Reich more solid than the existing patchquilt. The power which little more than a decade ago was aiming at the world revolution is now exerting every muscle to keep the apple-cart upright. But Hitler? The Nazis have proclaimed openly that it is their mission to keep the world in disorder. Determined to effect a redistribution of wealth, not between classes but between nations, they are ready to set the earth aflame to gain their ends. Not for nothing have they labored to bring down Geneva—the only semblance of authority among states. Can Hitler's Germany be expected to give its blessing to a scheme that bars its

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way to the East? It is significant that the Hungarian minister, General Räder, on returning from Berlin recently, tried to stampede his government into denouncing, unilaterally and on the spot, the military clauses of the Treaty of Trianon; it took all of Mr. Daranyi's energy and authority to prevent the coup. I mentioned in my previous article the warning sent down to Budapest by a special emissary of the Führer against any commitments to the Prague idea. And Göring, I learn, recently declared that the Reich asked nothing positive of Austria, but that the return of Otto—that is, the least step toward reconsolidation in the Danube area—would bring war.

That Italy does not find the scheme quite to its taste is equally evident and no more mysterious. Count Ciano, too, when accompanying the King to Budapest, urged the Hungarians to have done with their enforced disarmament. Mussolini knows quite as well as the English statesman that the Suez Canal—that is, British control of the Mediterranean—can only be defended, or challenged, from the Danube—and from the Tagus He knows, in other words, what his predecessors—Giolitti, for instance—discovered before him: that to fulfil its destiny in *mare nostrum* Italy must make sure of having in its rear no solid hostile land mass. The dissolution of the Dual Monarchy into its component atoms partly met that indispensable condition. Therefore we may rest assured that the Duce will leave no stone unturned to wreck every attempt, whatever the pretext and whatever the form, to unify the Danube basin. And this, in passing, casts a revealing light upon the origin, viewed from the banks of the Tiber, of the Rome-Berlin axis. Austria-Hungary gone, there remained the vastly more solid and formidable mass of Hitler's Germany. There was scarcely any hope of *its* dismemberment in the visible future. Poincaré's efforts to that end had proved worse than futile. The only alternative was to neutralize the Reich by alliance.

My personal opinion is that the Italo-Yugoslav treaty of last March had in Rome's eyes the very same purpose. It goes without saying that the published text does not reveal half of what it contains. But it is clear enough from the behavior of Belgrade that Mussolini sought and obtained something more than a triumph of prestige, and that the end in view was to detach Yugoslavia not so much from the old Little Entente as from the new widened one that was in the making. One had but to see the face of Mr. Krofta, the Czech Foreign Minister, as I did, on the morrow of that startling event, to perceive that something more serious than the semi-anachronistic league against the Magyars was at stake. Coming as it did on top of a series of other disquieting happenings, it was scarcely reassuring. Last November, after Mussolini's Milan blast about the Hungarian frontiers, Prague and Bucharest duly lodged an energetic protest; Belgrade held its peace. Shortly thereafter, I learn, Stoyadinovich, in receiving a delegation of the Magyar minority in Yugoslavia, addressed them in these astonishing terms: "Hungary has overlooked the first principle of strategy—the contraction of front. Why does it persist in fighting for revision on three separate sectors?" In July, a few weeks after my return, a Yugoslav journalist for the semi-official *Vreme* was granted an interview by the Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, the first time this has occurred since the war. M. de Kanya, it is even said in authoritative circles, is soon to pay an official visit to Belgrade.

I have not seen Mr. Stoyadinovich, let alone the Prince Regent Paul. The present rulers of Yugoslavia, it would seem, are ill at ease these days with the French press; and I was the accredited representative of a Paris daily. At a banquet on the day of my arrival the Havas correspondent was ready to bet me the costliest bottle of wine that the Premier would not give me an interview; he himself, he explained, had been waiting for one for three months. Subsequently friends and colleagues of the head of the government assured me that they would arrange a meeting; they could see no reason, they said, why he should not receive me. Apparently Mr. Stoyadinovich did, for he remains one of the rare personages of the five countries with whom I have not spoken.

I have none the less obtained a glimpse of his point of view from numerous conversations with his understudies, which I shall briefly summarize; and then I shall endeavor to convey what, by hints, innuendoes, and pregnant silences, they let you guess. They begin by protesting that they are not deserting their old friends. Why, the Little Entente and the alliance with France are the very keystones of Yugoslavia's unalterable foreign policy. (A few days later I was to hear the identical formula from Carol II and M. Antonescu.) The rapprochement with Italy? Well, to begin with, it is nothing of the sort. it is scarcely more than a *modus vivendi*. Italy, one should keep in mind, is Yugoslavia's best customer. Oh, the pact of "eternal friendship" with Sofia. It is not in contravention of the Balkan Entente; the Bulgars are the kin of the Serbs and Croats; what more natural than that Belgrade should try to draw closer to them? In short, the Stoyadinovich government is endeavoring—as responsible statesmen should—to secure the frontiers of the country by eliminating friction between it and its neighbors. If Prague and Bucharest are not doing likewise, they are neglecting their opportunities and their duty. But aren't they? Rumania has come to an understanding with its neighbor Poland, hasn't it? That does not violate the Little Entente pact. That document does not forbid the three allies from living on good-neighbor terms with other countries. Quite the contrary: everything that relaxes the tension serves the common interest. And, when it comes to that, what about Czecho-Slovakia? Has it not made a deal with the Soviets—a veritable treaty of alliance this time, and with a state, observe, whose frontiers nowhere touch its own? And France itself? Hasn't France signed a pact with Moscow? Has not M. Laval done the very thing—ironed out the roughnesses with Italy, or tried to—which in certain circles is held against Yugoslavia?

It is at this point that the innuendoes, hints, and silences begin. Yugoslavia, because the largest single item of its foreign trade consists of exchanges with Italy, suffered more from "sanctions"—which it took seri-

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ously—than any other state. And then what did England and France do? They let the little powers down. France is so far away, so immersed in internal complexities—political, financial, social—that its small allies must look to themselves. If this sounds like a faint echo out of Berlin, what follows has a stronger, more unmistakable timbre. France has not only done little to help China, Ethiopia, and Spain; it is apparently incapable of taking a firm stand in its own defense. When Berlin denounced the military clauses of the Treaty of Versailles the interested powers staged the futile comedy at Stresa. And then came worse. When, on March 7, 1936, the Reich reoccupied the Rhineland, in defiance of treaties, France did nothing at all. In these circumstances are the little powers to be blamed for standing guard over their own security?

But where the Germans have been most efficient in propaganda against the Little Entente and against France is in exploiting the pacts, both of the Czechs and the French, with the U. S. S. R. I say "exploiting," not creating. The suspicions and repugnances existed already, in Rumania as well in Yugoslavia; Berlin had but to turn them to account. One would have thought, no doubt, that after Moscow's liquidation of the world revolution, after the Soviet Union had gone sensible and democratic and made alliances with bourgeois powers and joined the League of Nations, the Nazi attempt to revive the *cordon sanitaire* of Clemenceau's days would have been laughed out of court by the toughest of diehards. Not at all! The word passed around by the local Communist parties that Moscow was still Moscow, that the Third International had merely gone into a tactical slumber, to reawaken presently more resplendent, or terrifying, than ever, seems to have been taken for gospel not only by the credulous and hopeful proletariat but also by the credulous and panic-stricken masters of this earth.

If the "democracies" of the West, trembling before a bogy of their own creation, are ready—in China, in Ethiopia, in Spain—to put class prejudice before preponderant national interest, are the pessimists to be blamed for whispering around that were Czecho-Slovakia to be attacked by Germany tomorrow, its allies, through fear of undermining Hitler's credit and precipitating world revolution, would do nothing more than they did in 1931, or 1935, or 1936-37?

Tibor Eckhardt is, I have said, well disposed toward the Hodza plan for the consolidation of Central Europe. He may continue to think as he does now and to act accordingly when if he becomes head of a Hungarian government. But his ally, Count Bethlen, after assuring me that in foreign policy he and Eckhardt see eye to eye, made no secret of his skepticism and hostility toward the scheme. "Austria, I know, is for it," he told me, "because like Czecho-Slovakia it is menaced by Germany. But we are living on the best of terms with the Reich." This after the misfire of the putsch in Hungary last February and the economic colonization of the country by Berlin! And while Mr. Daranyi, thanks to the progressive industrialization of his country, is managing to detach himself gradually from the Magyar feudal barons, the irreconcilable protagonists of "revisionism," he must still reckon with them.

In the general gloom there is one ray of light. The Hodza scheme may yet see the day if the rumors current throughout the Danube basin are well founded. They are to the effect that if England and France were to make certain material and face-saving concessions, Mussolini would be delighted to jump off the Rome-Berlin axis and return to the Stresa front. That axis, it seems, has been creaking badly for some time. As I write, news dispatches come to confirm the persistent prophecies heard around Vienna and elsewhere. Were this to happen, the Little Entente would suddenly get new blood into its veins. But if the rumors prove false, we may expect all the adventures and all the disasters.

Detroit's Labor Slate

BY JOEL SEIDMAN

"AND I propose the name of Maurice Sugar for our slate!" There is an outburst of applause, the loudest of the evening. Another speaker has the floor. A Negro should also be on our ticket," he says. Again there is widespread applause.

It was an enthusiastic audience that heard these nominations in June and received reports from committees on platform, candidates, and ways and means. For a labor political movement is in the process of formation in Detroit. The three to four hundred delegates to the Political Action Committee were mostly young men from the newly organized automobile plants, among whom sat older and more experienced representatives of the craft unions of the A.F. of L.

Since then the picture has changed somewhat, and for the worse. That the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O., despite their bitter enmity elsewhere, could cooperate in political action in Detroit was indeed remarkable. In July, following the lead of the Building Trades Council, the A.F. of L. central labor body withdrew from the joint political movement. Now the A. F. of L. is backing a rival candidate for mayor. To further complicate matters, Frank X. Martel, the local A. F. of L. head, is Michigan chairman of Labor's Non-Partisan League, to which the anti-unionists look for support of their slate.

In this proletarian, union-conscious city labor has a real chance to nominate its candidates in the non-partisan primary to be held on October 5, and to put them in

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office in the final election on November 2. Indeed, the United Automobile Workers alone may achieve some political success. Already that vigorous union has 200,000 members in Detroit, with 100,000 auto workers yet to be enrolled. In a city with a population of 1,700,000, 300,000 auto workers and their families are easily a majority.

Patrick H. O'Brien, a liberal Democratic lawyer with a good labor record, is the labor candidate for mayor. O'Brien worked in the copper mines for several years, then taught school, and finally practiced law. Elected to the bench in 1911, he won attention by dissolving an injunction that had been issued against striking copper miners. The injunction forbade picketing, and O'Brien dissolved it on the ground that the constitutional rights of the miners had been impaired. He hopes to obtain the support of the local Democratic Party, or a part of it, in addition to that of the C.I.O.

The seventeen-point platform that has been drawn up and tentatively adopted is a progressive one. Perhaps the most sweeping plank proposes that public utilities be municipally owned, as the street railways have been since 1922. Other planks provide for labor representation on all commissions, the forty-hour week for city employees, advancement on a seniority basis, and hours and wages for city workers similar to those prevailing for the same classifications in private business. The police are to be used to protect the people, not to evict or intimidate them or to break strikes. An adequate welfare budget is to be established, and overcrowding in classrooms eliminated. Health facilities are to be expanded, and free medical service is to be provided to those unable to pay. Sweatshop conditions are to be abolished.

Lower taxation for the low wage-earner is promised, together with increased and enforced taxation of the wealthy. This is of particular importance in a state that since 1933 has had a 3 per cent sales tax, even upon food. On the issue of housing, which is vital just now in Detroit, the platform pledges an adequate program, to include the abolition of city slums and the establishment of a municipal housing project.

The automobile workers have already learned that friends of labor are not always to be trusted after they attain political office, even when they hail from labor's ranks. The union members learned this last March, when they staged their great protest demonstration in Cadillac Square, in the heart of Detroit. When they asked for a permit to demonstrate there, every member of the Detroit Common Council voted in the negative, including Robert G. Ewald, president of the bricklayers' union, who had been elected two years before with the backing of the Detroit and Wayne County Federation of Labor. Not until the auto workers announced that they would demonstrate in Cadillac Square, permit or no permit, did the city councilmen vote grudging assent.

Ewald, for this and similar reasons, is not precisely popular among the auto workers. The district council of the United Automobile Workers, with Ewald in mind, voted not to support any member of the present council for reelection. When the Building Trades Council withdrew its support from the joint slate it indorsed Ewald for reelection, and the A. F. of L. has since indorsed him also.

Interestingly enough, it was Ewald who defeated Sugar in the 1935 race. Detroit municipal elections are nonpartisan, with the highest nine candidates for the Common Council being elected. Ewald was ninth two years ago with 69,000 votes, and Sugar was tenth with 55,000. As attorney for the United Automobile Workers and many other labor groups, Sugar has figured prominently in labor struggles in Detroit and won the support of large groups of workers. It is significant that Sugar was opposed by all three Detroit dailies, while Ewald had the support of them all. Only 167,000 of the half-million registered voters of the city voted in 1935, which shows what the auto workers' union could accomplish politically if it could get its 200,000 Detroit members to go to the polls.

The Detroit dailies have already attacked the labor slate, and they will certainly fight it with all the bitterness they can command. The most liberal of the three, at least by reputation, is the Detroit *News*, though it is difficult to discern this liberalism when anything closer to Detroit than a foreign war is involved. The *News* pretends to be friendly to labor, but wears a pained expression whenever labor seeks to assert its rights. Its editors hailed the withdrawal of the building tradesmen from the labor slate as "glad news for all who prize this city's non-partisan form of government." The gains made under the non-partisan charter will be secure, said the *News*, "only as long as Detroiters choose their city government primarily as Detroiters, and not as members of any group or clique." It is charming, in this sophisticated age, to find that a great paper can be so naive.

In attacks upon the labor slate the pace has thus far been set by a local business publication with the peculiar name of the *Saturday Night*. "The next Mayor of Detroit," says that eminent publication, "will either be a radical with a Moscow odor in his whiskers or a man with enough native pride to battle for a return to decency." Thus to label the eminently respectable Judge O'Brien is slightly amusing; I have seen the Judge, and I can assert that he wears no whiskers, and that neither Stalin nor Trotsky would recognize a disciple in him. But the *Saturday Night* has no sense of humor, and every epithet that may cost a vote will be hurled at labor's candidates in this campaign. Nor does the *Saturday Night* forget the councilmanic candidates; one of them, it asserts, is supposed to advocate "white wives for buck Negroes."

The automobile workers have had an interesting experience with political action. Last year they supported the effort to form a farmer-labor party in both the city and the state. The district council and many of the locals of the U.A.W.A. were affiliated with the Farmer-Labor Party, as were a number of the craft locals of the A. F. of L. The Detroit and Wayne County Federation of Labor, however, remained aloof. The support of the auto union was not then nearly as important as it is today, for the great growth in membership has occurred in the mean-

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time. The 1936 convention of the U.A.W.A., it is interesting to note, instructed the national office and the local unions to give the strongest possible support to the formation of national, state, and local farmer-labor parties.

Most of the thousands of automobile unionists who are providing the mass base of this interesting political effort had never been in any labor organization until a few months ago. It was they who helped to shatter the General Motors anti-union stronghold. Many of them followed the Coughlin banners but a short time ago. Raw and untrained, they may be marshaled into a genuine workers' political movement or swept off their feet by some silver-tongued fascist demagogue. That is what gives labor's new-born political venture in Detroit its real significance, and that is why this fall's municipal campaign in the capital of the auto empire will command attention.

What Chance Has China?

BY MAXWELL S. STEWART

MORE than two months have passed since the first outbreak of hostilities between Chinese and Japanese troops at Lukouchiao, southwest of Peiping. During that period the Japanese have occupied virtually the whole of northern Hopei and a large section of Shanghai. Although considerably outnumbered, they have taken the offensive on practically all fronts. Yet this offensive has not moved anything like as rapidly as planned. The confident boast of two weeks ago that the Chinese would soon be "annihilated" in the Shanghai area has been far from justified.

A careful survey of the military developments of this undeclared war shows that despite serious handicaps the Chinese are doing extraordinarily well. In the Shanghai area 80,000 Japanese troops—nearly twice the number that were finally assembled in 1932—have yet to regain the territory which they won at that time and have suffered extremely heavy losses. Under the bombardment of naval guns the Chinese have conducted an orderly withdrawal from the most exposed positions, but they have not allowed themselves to be outflanked or crushed, as they were in 1932. Their blocking of the Whangpoo by sinking Japanese ships was one of the dramatic feats in the history of modern warfare.

The great Japanese offensive of September 6-7 appears to have bogged down without any appreciable gain in territory. Chinese aviators, despite abominable marksmanship, have helped to prevent the landing of 20,000 sorely needed Japanese regulars. While it is inconceivable that the Chinese can hold on indefinitely in the Shanghai area, their brilliant defense against a foe far superior in equipment has done much to boost Chinese morale and destroy the myth of Japanese invincibility.

In North China the Chinese did not acquit themselves so creditably in the early days of the conflict. Although Peiping was probably untenable, the failure of Chiang Kai-shek to give immediate support to the Twenty-ninth Route Army caused the city to be sold far too cheaply. The Chinese had a heaven-sent opportunity to counter-attack at the end of July, when the bulk of the Japanese army was held up in Manchuria by serious floods, but they failed to take advantage of the situation.

In recent weeks they have done much better. Their intrepid defense of Nankow Pass, though ultimately frustrated by a Japanese flanking movement, held up a large Japanese army for a fortnight and took a heavy toll in lives and equipment. During the last few weeks numerous bands of Chinese irregulars have appeared in the western hills near Peiping, ambushing Japanese, harassing lines of communication, and destroying war material. These bands have at times occupied villages within twenty miles of Peiping, and all efforts of the Japanese to dislodge them have proved singularly unsuccessful. The Chinese are still holding their own north of Paotingfu, the capital of Hopei, on the Peiping-Hankow railway, and are only a few miles south of Tientsin along the railway to Nanking. Heavy rains which have mired the Japanese motorized equipment have aided the Chinese throughout the entire region.

The loss of Kalgan undoubtedly represents China's most serious defeat, since it blocks the main road to Soviet Russia by way of Outer Mangolia. Reports from this area have been very fragmentary, but apparently Japan has not yet obtained control of the whole of Nankow Pass. This means that the Japanese at Kalgan have no direct means of communication with their base and, weakened by the revolt of their Manchurian mercenaries, may yet find themselves in difficulties.

In a struggle between massed armies China sooner or later is bound to be smashed. Although Chiang Kai-shek has several divisions of troops that man for man are equal or superior to any the Japanese can put in the field, he has not the artillery, tanks, or air force to hold out indefinitely against Japan's highly mechanized forces. His planes have shown up reasonably well compared with those of the Japanese, but they are outnumbered three or four to one. The Chinese armies have held their own at Shanghai because they had sense enough to withdraw when faced by overwhelming force. In the north a few thousand soldiers operating as guerrilla bands in the western hills and the Chinese plain-clothes men who penetrated into Tientsin in the early days of the conflict appear to have given the Japanese more trouble than the massed troops at Macheng or Paotingfu. Japanese mop-

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ping-up operations in the conquered areas around Shanghai have also been seriously hampered by plain-clothes men and snipers. China is a huge country, and the farther the Japanese extend their lines the more vulnerable they will become in guerrilla warfare.

Perhaps the most successful exponents of guerrilla tactics in recent years have been the Chinese Communists. For nearly ten years a small red army, never numbering more than 200,000 men, conducted a hide-and-seek warfare over most of the provinces of China. At the end of the period the Chinese soviets not only were stronger numerically than at the beginning but had succeeded in indoctrinating the peasantry of a great part of China with their beliefs. If the Chinese red army had had to depend solely on its own numbers, it would have been exterminated many years ago. But the Communists early developed a technique of organizing the peasant population behind their lines, a strategy which proved of invaluable assistance. The peasants not only assisted in transport and other services which ordinarily fall upon the regular troops but very often appeared behind the Nanking lines attacking communications and destroying military supplies. They acted as snipers and often participated in mass maneuvers to mislead the enemy regarding the location of the army's real strength.

Although the fact is not generally known, a peasant army of some 150,000 men already exists in Manchuria, under centralized command, and has been conducting warfare along these lines. During the past year these forces have repeatedly swooped down on isolated Japanese posts, cut railways, destroyed bridges, and otherwise hampered communications. They have been particularly effective when the *kaoliang* stands high in the fields; in those seasons the Japanese have done well to hold the main towns and keep the railways operating.

If China is to conduct a successful struggle against Japan, Chiang Kai-shek will have to tear a leaf from the Communists' notebook and organize the peasantry for resistance. As yet, though there have been fragmentary reports of peasant activity, particularly between Tungchow and Tientsin in the early days of the conflict, Chiang does not appear to have encouraged these tactics. Nor has he made any attempt to use the veterans of the red army, who are generally recognized as the most effective troops in China.

The ability of China to wage guerrilla warfare until the complex and weakened Japanese economic system breaks down under the strain of attempting to maintain an army of 500,000 to 1,000,000 men on Chinese soil depends on a variety of considerations, chiefly that of morale. It has not been so many years since all that a foreign power had to do to intimidate China was to stage a show of force. The Japanese have used these tactics many times in recent years with fair success. But on this occasion mass attacks and relentless bombing of defenseless cities have brought, not a weakening in Chinese morale, but a mounting determination to fight to the finish. For the first time in history the Chinese people as a whole are thoroughly aroused to the danger which threatens them. Nanking is assured of popular support as long as it continues to fight. Despite Chiang Kai-shek's previous waverings, there is reason to believe that he will carry on the contest till the end. The Japanese have made it clear that they will insist on his elimination before any compromise can be reached. And with Chinese public opinion in its present temper, he has no choice but to fight.

It is true that there is a strong fascist clique at Nanking that would sell out to Japan rather than see China come under Soviet influence. It is also true that Chiang has retained his German and Italian advisers in the face of the open sympathy which their home governments have shown toward Japan. But open support for compromise with Japan is impossible in China today. The real desires of the fascist organizations cannot be revealed until the Chinese public begins to tire of the conflict.

By that time it is likely that Japan's political and economic structure will also be showing signs of strain. For the moment an overwhelming majority of the population is undoubtedly behind the government in its invasion of China. The average Japanese has been told so frequently that his army is carrying the light of civilization and peace to China that he accepts the statement without question. He is convinced that Japanese arms are unconquerable and believes that victory, in some vague way, will mean prosperity for Japan. Events have shown that the liberal reaction of which so much was heard a few months ago was exaggerated. As was the case in 1931, the militarists have been able to use the conflict with China to destroy whatever strength Japanese liberalism may have possessed.

But it is axiomatic that public enthusiasm for an overseas war can only be maintained by victories and an ample food supply. Presumably the army propaganda bureau can furnish the triumphs, but food is likely to become a serious problem if the conflict is long protracted. While, owing to an extraordinarily good harvest this summer, no acute shortage may be expected for at least a year, production is bound to fall in another year with a large portion of the available man-power in the army. More immediately serious is the threat of financial and industrial disorganization. The Japanese national debt has reached the point where further borrowing can only result in inflation and a precipitous rise in prices. In trade circles it is reported that the normal Japanese exports of novelties for the Christmas season will be cut at least in half as a result of the inability of factories to obtain raw materials. While the disorganization of the consumer-goods industries will be offset for a time at least by the intense activity of the munitions plants, these too are bound to be ultimately affected by a shortage of raw materials. The breakdown of the exporting industries is bound, in turn, to create a further shortage of essential materials. Apart from coal, not a single one of the basic commodities which constitute the sinews of war can be obtained within the borders of Japan. Although the country doubtless has laid in heavy stocks, it is almost wholly dependent on imports for scrap iron, iron ore, cotton, oil, nickel, and all the alloys necessary for steel making. International sanctions or a strong private boycott would greatly hasten the inevitable breakdown of Japan's war machine.

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China does not begin to have the financial and industrial resources which Japan possesses, but neither is its economy so sensitive to the catastrophic effect of war. From 85 to 90 per cent of China's population is directly dependent on agriculture; the actual industrial population is insignificant. Owing to the almost complete absence of transport facilities, each province and to a large extent each village is virtually self-sufficient. The destruction of Shanghai will have no effect on the living standards of the peasants in the interior provinces. Half the country could be laid waste without seriously influencing the economic structure of the other half.

It must be admitted, however, that China's ability to carry on a protracted struggle with Japan will depend on material assistance from abroad. Although it has a number of armories in which small arms and munitions are manufactured, some of the largest are in areas that are likely to fall quickly under Japanese control. Even guerrilla warfare requires rifles and ammunition, if not machine-guns and hand grenades. Airplanes are indispensable, and the gasoline and oil to operate them can only come from foreign countries.

The non-aggression pact recently signed between China and the Soviet Union suggests that the political difficulties between these two countries have been settled sufficiently to permit Russia to furnish some of the needed supplies. But the extent to which Russia can aid is drastically limited by geographic barriers. Although the two countries are contiguous for many thousands of miles, there is only one well-established caravan route through which a large amount of supplies could be shipped by motor lorry—that from Urga to Kalgan. With this road blocked, more circuitous routes must be used across Mongolia or through Sinkiang, and it is doubtful whether any of these can be developed for regular truck transportation. No obstacle exists, however, to the dispatch of aircraft, and it is highly possible that the recent report that seventy-two Soviet planes had arrived in northern Shensi is accurate.

The success of H. H. Kung, Chinese Minister of Finance, in obtaining credits in the United States and most of the democratic countries of Europe suggests that the democracies may give general economic support to China as an offset to the growth of world fascism. There has been no indication thus far, however, that these credits will be made available for the munitions which are desperately needed. Nor is it entirely clear that the Western powers intend to enforce their legal right to trade with China as long as Japan does not declare war. But the interests of the powers lie definitely in this direction; only an ultimate Chinese victory will preserve the Open Door. Given the aid to which it is entitled, China may yet startle the world by turning back the tide of Japanese aggression.

Revolution in the Deep South

BY DERO A. SAUNDERS

THE last few months have seen the unfurling of storm signals again in the cotton belt. In somewhat worried headlines the financial pages note the ominous tone of government and private crop estimates which indicate that the Paradox of Plenty, 1937 style, is about to arrive in the shape of another bumper cotton crop. Forty Senators have signed a plea to the President to call a special farm session of Congress this fall, and a resolution was passed before adjournment which guaranteed that farm legislation would receive first consideration at the opening of the regular session in January. With one eye cocked on the Supreme Court the ghost of the AAA is showing signs of revival.

During the later part of March spot cotton was over 15 cents a pound in New Orleans. Since then progressive declines have brought it below 10 cents. If this were all, it would be enough: it would represent a loss in Southern purchasing power of over $400,000,000. But it is not a temporary fluctuation; it represents the initial stages of the death of old-style American cotton culture.

For mechanization, and all that it signifies, is already a fact in the cotton country. Quietly and unobtrusively the South has been for several years going through an agrarian revolution which the future may regard as the most important fact of this decade. No aspect of American life will escape its impact. And, especially, the already rickety social structure of the old South is in for a complete overhauling.

Cotton growing, like all agriculture, may be either extensive or intensive. The vast acres of Texas and Oklahoma are generally given over to extensive farming. Yields per acre are low and the area planted is large. Mechanization is no new thing for these sections; they have long employed tractors and developed cultivating and harvesting machinery suitable for giant fields and low yields. Their gins are equipped to handle cotton in all conditions and with large amounts of foreign matter. Generally speaking, the yield from such extensive farming is varied only by increasing or decreasing the acreage; conditions do not encourage the heavy use of fertilizer or other methods of growing two bales where one grew before.

Such sections, naturally, have escaped somewhat the effects of recent changes; but not so the states of the deep South—the black belt and the deltas of the Mississippi and its tributaries. In the states of Tennessee, Arkansas, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi is some of the richest land in the world. Despite the fact that

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cotton has been grown in some fields of this area without rotation or fertilizer for nearly a century, it is still perhaps the most fertile land on earth. In this section the effects of the new production methods have been and will be most marked, not only because machine agriculture pays enormous dividends in such favorable surroundings, but because the traditional social structure of the region, long insensitive to change, will not fit the march of technology without fundamental alteration.

Many things have prevented the growth of agricultural technology in the deep South. It was a land of cheap labor kept cheap; even the most ordinary mechanical improvements might prove more expensive than hand labor. Its small farmers and large planters were bound by tradition, the former from lack of education, the latter from the instinctive realization that their rickety perch atop the poverty-stricken Southern hierarchy would be shaken by new production methods. Both were content in periods of high prices, and neither group was able, in a credit-poor section, to improve techniques when low prices or depression pointed imperatively that way.

The long-delayed impetus toward machine farming first came, strangely enough, from the AAA. What temporary reduction of the cotton crop the AAA achieved soon resulted—by the nature of its upside-down logic—in the exact opposite. The poorest acres were invariably left fallow, while more intensive cultivation was practiced on those remaining. Farm machinery, indispensable to cheap but intensive farming, could be and was purchased by AAA subsidies.

No details on the extent of machine farming in the deep South are available, but existing figures and personal observation reveal its growth. The wholesale value of farm equipment sold nationally in 1936 was nearly half a billion dollars, only slightly less than in 1928. With the two greatest machine-using sections of the nation, the Texas-Oklahoma cotton belt and the Middle Western wheat belt, both suffering under intense droughts and correspondingly impoverished, a disproportionately large amount of this new farm equipment must have reached the deep South. Numerous large plantations in the Mississippi Delta have dispensed with work animals completely in the last four years and now use tractors, gang plows, and multi-row planters and cultivators. Small hardware merchants find their farm-implement sales becoming an increasingly important business item, and even the smallest Southern hamlet has today its farm-equipment dealer. Since agricultural machinery is commonly durable, each year's production tends to be a cumulative addition to the already existing quantity rather than a replacement.

The amazing increase of yield per acre in the above-mentioned states attests to the mechanization of the South. The average production during the three years 1934-36, the big years of mechanization thus far, was nearly 240 pounds per acre—an increase of about 25 per cent over the 1923-32 average. In Mississippi, which contains more rich delta land and produces much more cotton than any other state of the six, the average per acre in 1934-36 was more than 30 per cent higher than in 1923-32, and in the favorable 1936 growing season reached the amazing total of 305 pounds per acre, or 60 per cent more than the average 1923-32 output.

The general trend of the national cotton crop in the last few years has given final warning of the impending catastrophe. Despite AAA and subsequent acreage-reduction schemes the 1934 crop of about 9,500,00 bales rose to 10,500,000 in 1935 and 12,500,000 in 1936. Only the "blessed" interference of a devastating drought last year prevented another crushing surplus. Texas and Oklahoma ordinarily produce more cotton than any other three states; both of them, particularly Oklahoma, were visited in 1936 by severe droughts which cut their production to 105 pounds per acre, 27 per cent below their 1923-32 average. A recent unofficial estimate of the 1937 crop was about 16,600,000 bales, which will make it one of the largest crops since 1900.

Though unusual, such yields have occurred in the past without dire results. Today, however, the situation is different: within the past ten years the United States has lost a substantial part of its world cotton market. For decades the United States was the predominant cotton-growing nation of the world. It customarily produced about 60 per cent of the entire world crop, exporting during 1924-29 an average of about 8,300,000 bales a year. The onslaught of the world depression did not destroy the world market for cotton, but it took that market from the United States. That the loss is not merely temporary is indicated by both production and export data. In the years 1934-36 the United States produced only 40 per cent of the world crop as against the customary 60 per cent. Exports during those same years averaged about 6,200,000 bales, more than two million bales less than the 1924-29 average. In short, America was bereft of the foreign cotton markets at the same time that technological advance unfolded new production possibilities.

American tariff policy, of course, was in a large measure responsible for this loss of foreign cotton markets. (Cotton is by far the most important American export, larger than any other two export categories, and much larger than all other agricultural exports combined.) Tariffs, however, are but one aspect of the international struggle which is the distinguishing mark of our age. The belligerent nationalisms of today seek economic autarchy as a guaranty against the day of military reckoning; thus England pushes Egyptian and Indian cotton, Italy booms Ethiopia as a potential source of supply, and every nation attempts to purchase its cotton from colonial or subject sources. The economic idiocy of this course has long been recognized, but few examples are so clear as the AAA subsidizing the destruction of cotton in the United States while Britain subsidizes its production in Egypt.

The social aspect of the contemporary agrarian revolution in the South is of foremost importance. The old share-cropper system is thoroughly incompatible with new production methods. The crumbling of the institution of share-cropping has already become an impressive fact

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in the sections where mechanization has made its greatest strides. It is only logical, of course, that the breakdown of share-cropping should have received its first impetus from the AAA. Despite its many technical limitations share-cropping did possess certain advantages in certain situations. The planter and tenant, by and large, entered into a comparatively stable relationship, which ordinarily did not change during the growing and harvesting seasons. The planter was assured of his labor, and always felt a certain interest in keeping that labor alive. He was assured, by long experience, of a certain yield, subject only to the general vicissitudes of weather. The AAA, by putting parity money in his pocket, reducing his acreage and, proportionately, his need for labor, and pegging the price of his cotton, changed this situation almost overnight; the planter no longer was interested in assuming either the risks or obligations which small-scale tenant production necessitates. Numerous share-croppers were evicted outright, while many others were transformed in status to day laborers. Mechanization, of course, speeded this process along. The tenant family that farms a few acres on shares cannot be absorbed into large-scale agriculture, for the very theory of share-cropping is the splitting of a large tract into small units farmed separately. The share-cropper became the day laborer; and the day laborer is the rising economic category on the horizon of the deep South today.

The evaluation of the social desirability of this change in the Southern economic structure is for the future. On its debit side may be placed the destruction of the paternal obligation which the landlord sometimes felt toward his tenant. Long accustomed to dependence on a single planter, the new day laborer finds himself on the lowest rung on the agricultural ladder. Nevertheless, the appearance of a large class of agricultural day laborers in the South creates possibilities, as yet unrealized, for substantial improvement in the general welfare and standard of living. Whatever the moral value of the old paternalism, it always failed in the acid test of providing any defensible general standard of living. The real failures of share-cropping were both social and technical in character: on the social side it prevented any operation of the processes of the labor market; on the technical side it tended to hinder general Southern progress by weighing agriculture down with an outmoded economic organization.

The question of putting both planter and agricultural worker into the labor market is of prime importance. The general stability of tenure under the share-cropping system—at least a year—offered little opportunity for the best landlords to select the best tenants, or vice-versa. All too often the tenant's share of the crop was merely nominal, being "credited to account." The day laborer is in a different position. He is paid in cash by the day, without the abuses common to petty usury; he may select his landlord, comparing the offers of several. He has every incentive to improve his knowledge of farming technique, and he is in an infinitely better position to bargain collectively.

Any discussion of the social effects of mechanization in the cotton country naturally brings up the question of the mechanical cotton picker, much publicized as the Damoclean sword hanging over the share-cropper's head. The social effects of such a machine may be considerable, although they will nowhere approximate the ominous headlines conceived by ill-informed writers. There are perhaps a score of mechanical cotton pickers in America today, and all of them are in a comparatively crude state of development. At least 10,000 machines, each picking steadily at the highest rate ever achieved in one day by any mechanical picker, would be required to harvest as much as 10 per cent of this year's crop. Great though its possibilities may be, for the next decade and perhaps longer its importance will be overshadowed by the technical improvements already available.

If the rise of the agricultural day laborer is potentially a forward step, the circumstances in which it occurs seem rather grim. The Southern laborer today does not face a long period of prosperity in which his economic betterment can be achieved with comparative ease. The world market for American cotton is declining, rayon is making steady progress, and the very mechanization which created him creates the threat of a crushing surplus. Since this problem becomes steadily more urgent, it may be well to consider the two general lines that a solution might take. The first is the international approach, through the world-wide reduction of tariff barriers and the restoration of world trade. Whatever the ultimate desirability of this course, the cautious steps involved will be too slow to save the South from the immediately threatening surplus—nor will a renewal of world trade necessarily restore our cotton markets abroad. The other approach is the economic rebuilding of the South, with cotton culture partially superseded by diversified agriculture and intelligent industrialization. Cotton has always been wrung out of the South, so to speak, as an economic tribute. Those millions of bales of cotton every year signify the economic neglect of the South's own needs: clothing the world, it has not yet clothed and fed and housed itself. Such a rebuilding, of course, would present substantial difficulties: it would necessitate wide departures from private enterprise and as a problem in planning would tax all the resources that we have ever gathered through TVA or similar experience. It would also necessitate the complete scrapping of the present Administration's attempt to make small homesteaders out of the landless millions of the South; without some form of producers' cooperative, they cannot compete with mechanized agriculture.

Either approach to the solution of our perennial cotton problem, now coming to a head, will be difficult; the real danger, however, lies in the probability that nothing at all will be done. In such a case we shall have further surpluses and further frantic attempts to destroy our wealth. Even more ominous, if a cotton surplus coincides with the coming of a major war, no counsels of prudence or restraint will prevent the South from attempting to get rid of that surplus to belligerents. It may well be that the dizzy spiral of economic entanglement in a new world war will be begun by the cotton South.

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

WILL there ever be a time again when it will be proper to start a third party in the United States? I am moved to this query by the complete *volte-face* made by *Common Sense,* which until now has steadfastly advocated a farmer-labor party with the slogan "Production for Use." Today it suddenly discovers, a year in advance of the next Congressional election and three years before the next Presidential campaign, that the thing to do is stand by, not the good old Democratic Party, but the new-born Democratic organization headed by Franklin Roosevelt. This, it declares, "has been gradually becoming all that the third-party forces, the Farmer-Laborites and the progressives, could hope for—and their increasingly close identification with it indicates that they know its real significance. It can assure labor far more than labor could hope for in a party of its own. If it marches in closed ranks with these natural allies the danger of a fascist movement arising will remain remote." *Common Sense* admits that the New Deal has not come out against the profit system itself as has the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota, but maintains that "its actual accomplishment and potentialities are no less radical. And the more the progressive and labor forces work in it the more its direction will be set definitely to the left." It also asserts that the fight over the Supreme Court has cleared the air, and it welcomes the cleavage within the Democratic Party. It foresees a new alignment of conservatives and liberals in separate political parties if the present trend continues until 1940.

Well, similar arguments have postponed the organizing of that third party ever since 1924, when Senator La Follette made his remarkable run and polled nearly five million votes, with little or no money and an organization that was created overnight. With his death that movement ended. In 1928 we were told that the thing to do was to wait until 1932. That year also turned out to be not propitious, but since then we have heard a great deal of talk about the absolute necessity of a Labor Party coming into being in 1940 to solidify the advances gained under Franklin Roosevelt. Now once more progressives are called upon to stay in the party fold. Frankly, it seems to me shortsighted reasoning. In the first place it is building one's hopes upon a politician, and a politician who is in addition a Roosevelt; and that means something very uncertain. The resemblance between Theodore and Franklin is much greater than most people realize. In 1912 Theodore denounced the Republican Party as an alliance of thieves and crooked capitalists and said that it ought to be smashed for good and all. I am not in the least exaggerating the violence of his language and can give the exact quotations if anybody wants them. Four years later he was back in the party of the thieves and crooked capitalists. No one can foretell just where Franklin Roosevelt will stand in the next three years, particularly if the Republicans should make great gains in next year's elections. In the most brilliant analysis of the President and his future that I have seen anywhere, Stanley High in the current *Harper's* wonders whether Roosevelt's faith in his ability to prove that the most critical and pressing problems can be worked out inside the structure of capitalism and democracy would survive a major defeat. There are still other questions that may be raised about him.

For one thing the President is steadily undermining democracy by encouraging the growth of militarism in the United States. Wherever you find large armies and navies, there you find enemies of democracy. Beyond that, the politician in him may make him yield to the Southern reactionaries in his party. I am afraid that the power of those Southern bourbons is underestimated by my friends the editors of *Common Sense.* There is no evidence that so practical a politician as Mr. Roosevelt will carry the New Deal to the point where he will alienate all the Southern leaders. Yet if he were heading straight for the radical changes we need in our national life he would have to repel them more and more, if not break with them altogether. As I have repeatedly pointed out, the Robinsons and Harrisons and other Southern politicians who have been standing for the New Deal have hardly done so out of any genuine conviction of the necessity of radical reforms—the abolition of economic privilege or the redistribution of wealth. They have opposed the anti-lynching bill and the wages-and-hours bill, and they may be counted on to stand fast if at any time there should be a real attempt, let us say, to unionize the South, to give some measure of justice to the Negro, or to end the horrors of the share-cropper system. Nor has Mr. Roosevelt yet shown any real readiness to cut loose from the corrupt Democratic machines in some of our largest cities.

So I, for one, am not prepared to accept the position of *Common Sense.* I do not propose to assume in 1937, three years prior to 1940, that we no longer need a third political party. Too many times I have seen promising political movements wrecked by faith in some "good man," and seen that good man go bad or pass from the scene and leave the political parties just as they were before his advent. I regret that my production-for-use friends are today so willing to climb on the Roosevelt band-wagon. Three years from now they may thoroughly regret it too.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

A Good Doctor's Story

THE CITADEL. By A. J. Cronin. Little, Brown and Company. $2.50.

THERE'S no sensible way that I can discover to review this book. It badly needs writing; at the same time the material is well worth our attention—a crowded story clumsily but sincerely told, even passionately convincing at times.

This is Dr. A. J. Cronin's latest, his fourth, novel in the last seven years, and in the opinion of the publishers the finest he has yet written. It has to do with the rise and transfiguration of a young Scottish physician—of considerable genius—come fresh from St. Andrews to the drabbest of Welsh mining towns to make his debut in the world. From thence, through sheer ability and drive, though ably assisted by his little wife, Christine, he goes with rapid strides to London and the top of his profession. Not without receiving many bruises from the world. His name is Manson and "Man's son" seems to be the implication. London rather seduces Dr. Manson for a while so that he comes to an impasse: either he must go ahead—whither?—or return to his old scientific idealism. That's the story, the Citadel to be taken. Dr. Cronin's qualities as a writer leave him little choice.

It's a somewhat old-fashioned morality using the medical profession as its stage, a scathing criticism of the state of medicine in England today, of conditions no different from those prevalent elsewhere in the world, or perhaps even a trifle better there than in most other places. The book ought to make good reading for the self-righteous, who will thereby forget what slippery blackguards they are themselves.

The principal interest of the book, the picture Dr. Cronin gives of this English world of medicine—and what goes on in it—is convincingly real, though at two pivotal moments he leaves us high and dry wondering what precisely the diagnosis can have been to come so pat to his plot. In the main the medical part of the book is first-rate and will prove, I think, even to the general reader its chief attraction. Were Dr. Cronin as advanced a writer as his views in this book make him to be a physician, perhaps the book as it stands would never have existed, which would have been a pity. But as a writer he wasn't up to that.

I am reminded of another physician who might have done better by the material. He lives up the line from my suburb and has what the people call "fits," so much so that his old mother often drives about with him protectively on his calls. These fits consist in moments of passion when he is constrained by superhuman laws to seduce any woman who comes within his radius of action at the moment. And he has been doing it for years—as several batches of children by various young women testify. He remains for all that a bachelor and enjoys membership in a local church, the Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club, etc. Poor fellow! Such a brilliant mind. Most unfortunate. Now there would be the proper salty touch somehow lacking here.

I am incited to these animadversions by the legend in gilt letters across the book's attractive jacket, for which, by the way, Dr. Cronin is in no way to be held responsible: "A great novel about a doctor by a doctor who is a great novelist." No, it isn't a great novel, not in the sense that Norman Douglas or Ford Madox Ford would speak of a great novel. But it's a good novel, though it is often ironical to speak of a "good novel" today.

What Dr. Cronin doesn't see is that, as Ezra Pound would say, it's money and its misappropriation and artificial scarcity that are at the back of our troubles, and that unless you see the thing through to its source you can see nothing. Cronin of course has an inkling of that. But though the medical profession no more needs to be shown up in this matter than the Cabinet (ex-Harrow) profession or the plumbing profession, the writing profession, in my humble opinion, has not in the present case been much illuminated.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

North of the 60th Parallel

"40,000 AGAINST THE ARCTIC." By H. P. Smolka. William Morrow and Company. $3.50.

HERE is a fascinating account of a great transformation which has been taking place in the last few years—the evolution of an Arctic empire in Siberian regions which have long been regarded as suitable only for penal settlements. Startling in the rapidity of its development, this pioneering venture has been made possible by the coordination of ultra-modern inventions with the scientific planning of a totalitarian state.

Mr. Smolka's book presents a narrative of the Siberian journey of a British journalist with command of the Russian language, but it has all the fascination of a novel, and it contains geographic and other scientific data which are to be found only in related books printed in Russian. It has been the radio, the airplane, and the ice-breaker, working together, which have opened within the space of a few years the long-sought-for "Northeast passage" as a commercial transportation route along the bleak Siberian coast. The region affected—all of it north of the 60th parallel of latitude and north of the line of the Trans-Siberian Railway—is one-third the size of Asia and twenty-five times that of France. Though rich in resources, it has hitherto lacked two vitally essential elements—colonists and transportation. The Soviets call it the "America of the future."

Up to recently only nine small vessels had, under great hazards, effected the Northeast passage. The open water to be found during the brief summer is usually in separated areas which vary with each season. Today the route is traversed by a dozen vessels annually, and many more ships operate within the two sections which are separated by the difficult coast of the long Taimyr peninsula. Ice-breakers are stationed at the more difficult points along the route, and there are many airplane stations. When in difficulty a vessel sends out a radio call for a plane; in an hour or two the plane arrives, scouts ahead for open passages, and then drops to the ship by parachute a map with the possible route indicated.

Connecting this northern transportation route with the Trans-Siberian Railway along the southern border of the empire, the navigable Yenisei River flows due north from Krasnoyarsk to Dickson Island. Situated near the Arctic circle is the new polar capital of Igarka with a population of 12,000 in the winter time and 20,000 in the summer. From

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this city fleets of vessels go out to Murmansk, a port north of Leningrad which is always open, and thence many of them to Great Britain. Krasnayarsk, where the Trans-Siberian Railway crosses the Yenisei River, is today quite a modern city with many skyscrapers.

The early removal of the two great handicaps to the development of this territory is now promised. The main staple articles of export have been lumber, fish, and furs. Exportation of the first of these has been curtailed by the long and difficult transportation and by the fact that coal for the vessels had to be brought in from the outside. Coal, however, has been discovered at Norilsk, which is not far from the Yenisei and is now being connected with it by railway. Similarly, it has been necessary to import salt for preservation of the fish. Now, however, great salt deposits have been discovered at Nordvyk on the Siberian coast, and 150,000 tons of it will be mined in 1938.

Maps and numerous photographs are included in the book to furnish proof of most of its statements. It is significant that the Arctic pathfinders are upheld by a vision of the future. Their talk is of regular air connection across the Arctic to America, and Dr. Schmidt's pioneer transarctic flights give earnest of such traffic. The pilots who are making these flights have already won their spurs in the Siberian coastal service.

W. H. HOBBS

Europe's Wars

WAR MADNESS. By Stephen and Joan Raushenbush. Washington, D. C.: National Home Library Foundation. 25 cents.

BEWARE OF EUROPE'S WARS. By Alfred M. Bingham. With a Preface by John Dos Passos. *Common Sense* Magazine. 10 cents.

WHEN the Senate Committee Investigating the Munitions Industry began to map out its work in the summer of 1934, it decided upon two principal objectives: a maximum amount of national publicity for its findings with a view to familiarizing a large section of the population with the facts as they came to light; and the passage of legislation to rectify such evils as might be found to exist. Progress toward the latter goal has been very meager, a fact for which the committee cannot be blamed, for it tried valiantly to get the necessary laws passed and met with continued opposition. The only significant piece of legislation enacted—as a direct result, no doubt, of the committee's work—is the Neutrality Act, which as it now stands on the statute books is a far cry from what the committee recommended in the beginning, and which is being attacked with considerable justification both by those who are for and those who are against isolation.

In the matter of publicity, the results have been more encouraging. Indeed, the actual amount received has exceeded the committee's most extravagant expectations. There is some question, however, whether the evils revealed have impressed themselves upon the public mind sufficiently to stimulate effective action for their abolition. The Raushenbushes, who were closely connected with the committee and who base their very interesting little book largely upon its findings, are in effect testing the public, challenging "those who want this country to stay out of foreign wars" to do something about it. Lest their readers might have overlooked or forgotten certain details, they devote approximately half of their space to a summary of the atrocities of which the munitions makers are guilty. Of necessity, it is a sketchy summary, for the facts filled twenty-odd volumes of testimony, but it gives the reader a striking picture of callousness, corruption, collusion, and plain, calculated murder for profit. This should suffice to stir deep resentment against war and the conditions which make for war; and the authors move on to eight concrete proposals for keeping the United States out of war.

The first four proposals are partially, and in modified form, included in the present Neutrality Act, the book having gone to press before that law was passed. The first is adherence to the "cash and carry" principle. It is contended that this will not necessarily favor nations having big navies provided sales are limited to peace-time or "normal" proportions, and that it will prevent in our own country the development of a war boom, which is a sure forerunner of war. The second is to forbid Americans to travel in belligerent ships, and to treat as warships armed merchant vessels of belligerents. Thirdly, despite the acknowledged difficulties of such an effort, the authors would attempt to limit drastically war profits. They would do so by means of effective legislation and not by pretended moves in that direction, such as the misleading and very dangerous Sheppard-Hill bill introduced in the last Congress. Fourthly, they strongly urge support of the Ludlow amendment requiring a nation-wide referendum on any war save one of actual invasion, and they urge as well a referendum, without an amendment, to determine the nation's sentiment on drafting men for service overseas.

Chief consideration is given to a proposal that the government produce "most of its combat munitions." There can be no objection to the principle, they point out, because "the power of the nation to provide for its national defense is absolute." Advantages to be gained from such a move are these: it would prevent the growth of militarism, which is now working toward an alliance between munitions makers and the army and navy; military secrets would not be divulged as readily as they are now; the government would save money through lower production costs and would remove the vested interest which munitions manufacturers now have in war; and, finally, the disgraceful practice of bribing foreign government officials would be ended.

No doubt any one of the proposals could be, with comparatively little effort, shot full of holes. Indeed, one could find in the authors' own analysis of the powerful economic and political forces which cause wars grounds for condemning this list as purely palliative in character, doomed to failure since our economic order is what it is. Such a disposition of these honest and sincere proposals would be a grave mistake. War is dangerously near, and any suggestion for postponing the fatal day is worth considering. The price of the book should make possible its wide distribution. It will be a pity if peace groups do not undertake to distribute it in large quantities. It should, especially, be made available to workers, who may be encouraged by it to take effective action against war.

Another plea for American isolation is advanced in Alfred Bingham's pamphlet, "Beware of Europe's Wars." This is a passionate and hysterical summation of arguments why the United States should stay out of European squabbles. It would seem that ample defense of this thesis is possible without resorting, as Mr. Bingham does, to half-truths about the similarity between the Hitler and Stalin regimes which seek to prove that neither side is worth fighting for. Particularly disconcerting is his callous and largely inaccurate account of what is happening in Spain. The pamphlet is

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worth owning, however, because of its first four pages, which contain a preface by John Dos Passos contrasting the current American with the European scene. It Is written in Dos Passos's masterly fashion, and presents some very keen and interesting observations. ROSE M. STEIN

Mann and Superman

FREUD, GOETHE, WAGNER. By Thomas Mann. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

AT FIRST glance these three essays, set down in different moods for various purposes, seem to have found their way fortuitously into the present volume. But those who heard them delivered this spring at the New School for Social Research or those who are interested in the context of Thomas Mann's thought will perceive a relevance and a symmetry in his choice of subjects. Each of the figures occupies a strategic point in the civilization of which Mann himself is the dispossessed heir. If Goethe was the prophet of modern German culture crying in the wilderness, Wagner became the stage-manager who provided atmosphere for its triumphs, and Freud is the diagnostician who sits at its bedside. Mann, with his knack of discerning human archetypes for historical situations, can scarcely be unaware of the symbolic force of his own position.

In his threefold role of German, writer, and exile, he is anxious to salvage as much tradition as possible, to seek precedents for cosmopolitanism instead of nationalism, rationalism rather than obscurantism, liberal enlightenment as against fascist propaganda. Freud, as a notorious exponent of *Kulturbolshewismus,* is on his side from the start. To make such a case for Goethe requires certain sacrifices—preferring the second part of Faust to the first, Wertherism to Götzism, the complacencies of Weimar to the ardors of Strassburg. Wagner can only be saved by drastic redefinition, so a distinction is set up between folk art and national art. Wagnerian music-drama, since it is not provincially but professionally Teutonic, is qualified to represent Germany in the concourse of nations, along with the work of Dürer and Luther, Bach and Kant.

But these studies are more intimately connected by the *Leitmotiv* of self-consciousness. It was Goethe who taught writers to convert everything they touched into autobiography. His life, with its carefully marked periods and its succession of mistresses that schoolboys are compelled to memorize, has become the standard of a literary career; "the *imitatio* Goethe . . . can still shape and mythically mold the life of an artist." To turn from Goethe to Wagner is to proceed from egoism to paranoia. Superficially his art bears a closer relation to the world at large, but actually it distorts and transmogrifies it by trying to comprehend the whole thing. Freud again, as an explorer of the self, needs no justification, yet Mann has etherealized the Freudian metaphysic by emphasizing the projection of the ego upon phenomena at the expense of the impact of events upon consciousness.

From these masters of the self-conscious, then, Mann has inherited not only his psychological technique, but also his peculiar realization of the destiny of the artist. Others, by posing thir own dilemmas, have sharpened his awareness of the problem—Nietzsche and voluntaristic philosophy, Ibsen and the naturalistic drama, Dostoevski and the Russian novel. Tonio Kröger, like his creator the son of a German father and a Latin mother, spends his life oscillating between two worlds, the bourgeois and the bohemian; as for the society which produced him, he can neither live with it nor without it. For Mann, at least, this impasse is now over, and he is free in limbo to be as idealistic and eclectic and narcissistic as he likes. By shedding environment factors his psychology, which always made more of symbols than of reflexes, verges into mythology.

T. S. Eliot, in his review of "Ulysses," welcomed myth as an element that would bring richness and pattern to the modern novel. With Mann, "The Magic Mountain" bridged the gap between realism and allegory. In his *Novellen* he has Chekov's faculty for evoking the portentous by the trivial, as when the specter of fascism is conjured up by the improvised performance of a hunchbacked hypnotist in a little Italian watering-place. The Joseph trilogy comes as a final effort to abandon the particular for the typical, the immediate for the universal. Though it seems a brilliant exercise of the historical imagination, it cannot avoid certain odors of the museum; its scenes are all dioramas and its characters miracles of the taxidermist's art.

This later mythological approach, heavily explicit and bewilderingly mystical by turns, is observable in "Freud, Goethe, Wagner." Mann is a little too prone to see cosmic correspondences—for example, to trace Zola's Nana to the Babylonian Ishtar. His critical vocabulary remains indisputably German, so fuzzy that it would take Occam's razor to shave it clean. And his attitude toward his subjects is ultimately uncritical; he is concerned with messages, not methods; he seeks inspiration, not example. To parallel this outlook among familiar critics, we should have to turn to the hero-worshipers, to Emerson and Carlyle. Yet hero-worship is a test as well as a tribute, and Thomas Mann's own stature does not suffer in the company of the famous men whom he chooses to praise. HARRY LEVIN

Fantasia on the Left

THE CONQUEST OF POWER. LIBERALISM, ANARCHISM, SYNDICALISM, SOCIALISM, FASCISM, AND COMMUNISM. By Albert Weisbord. Covici-Friede. Two Volumes. $7.50.

AS I read this huge book, an old story familiar on both sides of the Atlantic came to my mind time and again. The wife of a governor pays a surprise visit to a state asylum. She is shown over the grounds by a guide who discourses quite intelligently about the conditions of the inmates. When she compliments him on his courtesy and knowledge, rare virtues among the officials of the region, she is surprised to learn that he himself is an inmate. He tells her a plausible and heartrending story about being railroaded to the institution by a faithless wife in league with an unscrupulous physician. In high moral indignation she promises to go directly to the governor to secure his release forthwith. As she turns to leave, the guide suddenly boots her in the rear, raises a reproving finger, and exclaims in rising inflection, "Don't forget to tell the governor!"

I picked up this book with large expectations. There is no systematic and comprehensive account in English of the movements it sets out to treat. The author has been active in labor organizations. He has been disillusioned with the opportunistic leadership of the Communist Party. Here, then, one was sure to find some fresh insights into the theory and practice of social doctrines, not by a pedant or ivory-tower academician but by an individual who had had first-hand experience with the class struggle in the raw. Alas! Save for the point at

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which it is hair-raising, the book is utterly pedestrian. It does not even approach the mediocre level of the much-abused doctoral dissertation. It is based largely upon secondary and tertiary sources—and some poor ones, at that. The author's familiarity is, in the main, limited to works available in English translation. Many of these he seems to have opened at random. In the preface Mr. Weisbord tells us he first conceived this work as a political primer. But although he now offers it as "a standard treatise," it has nothing in common with a standard treatise except length and price. The reader will search in vain for a straightforward presentation in their own terms of the social philosophies to which the book is presumably devoted. Mr. Weisbord is so eager to expose theories he disagrees with that he cannot take the time to expound them. No genuine analysis is given; the criticisms take the form of elaborate non-sequiturs.

All these, however, are the usual faults of leaders of lost sects who write their *apologia pro vita sua* in the guise of standard treatises. But Weisbord's distinction is the number of kicks he administers to the governor's wife. I give a few illustrations. First is his discovery that John Dewey has changed his liberalism in the direction of fascism. Proof? A sentence from Dewey's "Liberalism and Social Action," in which he says, according to Weisbord, "Liberty in the concrete signifies release from *past* oppressive forces." That Weisbord misquotes Dewey—probably unintentionally—is relatively unimportant. (What Dewey actually says is: "Liberty in the concrete signifies a release from *particular* evils.") The boot in the rear comes in Weisbord's comment which immediately follows the sentence quoted from Dewey: "Is it not clear that liberalism is now preparing itself to be the midwife to American organized and fascistic capitalism?"

This pales into insignificance compared to the variety of American communism which Weisbord offers as a substitute for Dewey's American liberalism. "Lynching is something for every American Communist to understand and not to scold. It has its roots in the democratic traditions of the country. It is the action of the mass itself which takes the law directly in its own hands. It shows a contempt for the regular legal process. It is something in which millions of Southerners and Westerners have taken part. . . . Communists must point out not that the process of vengeance or of direct action of the masses in the streets has been incorrect, but that the lynching has generally been in the wrong direction."

Everything after this must sound anticlimactic. But as evidence that such comments are not unrepresentative, I cite other examples. Polemicizing against those who have criticized the dogma of inevitability in the Marxian tradition because it tends to make human activity both unintelligent and unintelligible, Weisbord counters with the observation: "If instrumentalists say that the dictatorship of the proletariat is not inevitable, it is because they conceive that fascism may come, and they trim their sails in advance in order to meet it." It is not only critical intellectuals who play into the hands of fascism; any labor leader or radical who demands jobs for workers, according to Weisbord, is guilty of the same thing. "The Communist is in fact negating his own principles when he demands any jobs under capitalism, since all work under the present system can tend only to weaken the proletariat and strengthen the bourgeoisie and, with it, the capitalist state." Indeed, Weisbord does not hesitate to charge all revolutionary organizations in the United States with aiding the Department of Justice. "That [they] have not been averse to having the police register their members and sympathizers can be seen from the fact that they register no protest to the demands of the United States postal authorities for the names and addresses of all the subscribers of their papers, in order to obtain the second-class mailing privileges."

This has its pathetic as well as its humorous side. But Mr. Weisbord's state of mind is not without its social significance. He was formerly one of the leaders of the American Communist Party and ideologically is still living in what is technically called "third-period communism," i.e., the period of Communist sectarianism gone mad. His views can be matched by other choice selections from the history of the American Communist movement. The startling thing about it is that this and similar wisdom has been hatched by what its devotees call "scientific socialism." The larger issues which Mr. Weisbord's case raises are: What in so-called scientific socialism, as understood by *orthodox* Marxism, produces such attitudes and thought processes? What qualities of political leadership can we expect in practice if it is based upon theories of this type? What kind of institutional safeguards can be devised to protect the masses from saviors who regard themselves as the Voice of History when by some strange quirk of events power either falls into their hands or is thrust upon them? It is only in relation to such questions that Mr. Weisbord's thought merits discussion.

SIDNEY HOOK

Cressida of Troy

A TROJAN ENDING. By Laura Riding. Random House. $2.50.

THE importance of Troy to Miss Riding, and consequently the reason for this novel, cannot be stated in a few words. Miss Riding herself has written a great many words without making the matter too clear, though she has kept it in a strange way interesting. Few novels have been more personal in the sense of being saturated with a theme for which there appears to be no language available, and in the sense also of driving the reader constantly to wonder what the special meaning of the story is to the author. In her preface Miss Riding remarks that if she had been surer of her knowledge she would have written a poem about Troy. Leaving aside the fact that the best of all poems would have been her competitor, she was doubtless wise to do as she did. But it was not her knowledge of which she was unsure. It was herself; or rather it was the thing she wished her novel to say. Homer was so sure of himself that he expressed himself perfectly; the "Iliad" as a whole, that is, is what he had to say. "A Trojan Ending" is no such whole, though it has many brilliant parts; something is still unsaid. To use a phrase which one of Miss Riding's critical books has made current, it is a modernist poem: as close to us as the air we walk in, and as difficult to see.

At no time is the thesis of the novel—for, to be a little gross, it has a thesis—necessarily true. Miss Riding's conviction that the world of Troy was like our world remains for all its intensity an isolated conviction, and quite possibly nonsense. The Trojans and we alone have been mature; "ready to be alive"; "happy." We count our miseries, of course, and even our agonies, as Priam's people counted theirs; but like Priam's people, and particularly Cressida, we are blessed with "the certainty that what we now live has the essential taste of life—that is what life verily tastes like." No other age in what Miss Riding contemptuously calls history ever got anywhere near such certainty. "The rest—

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the slow, adolescent interval—was elaborately insincere." It is obvious that this means much to Miss Riding, for whom Troy is a symbol of whatever in humanity is most precious. But it is equally obvious that a reader who comes to her without an identical symbol will not be compelled to believe her, and will not even discover what it is that is so precious. "The journey back to Troy," says Miss Riding, "is a journey through a dream." Through her dream, that is; and as in all dreams the connections are missing.

The heroine is Cressida, around whom, both at Troy and in the Greek camp, an endless conversation collects itself. Miss Riding's people must talk a great deal because they must talk for her. She is never dramatic, for the simple reason that the story has no existence outside of her dream. And Cressida for all her intelligence is something of a prig because Miss Riding is so consciously using her to make the point that cannot quite be made—the point about Troy's perfection and about its utter, its unaccented awareness of the truth concerning itself. Troy's danger, indeed, is that it will languish in its grace and fade noiselessly out of being. "The Trojans," mused Helen, "had a gentle power of growing tired—which was their sanity. Yes, the Greeks were insane. The Greeks had a greed for destiny. They did not live." Troy has learned how to be bored beautifully, how to know everything without growing ugly from the knowledge. Yet therein for Cressida lies the threat of its extinction. "Could it be that the very trueness of Troy has weakened the Trojan appetite for life?" It could be; and that is why Cressida goes over to the Greek camp during the truce—to bring back an infection of falseness for life's sake. It is also why she deserts Troilus for Diomedes. For "Troy itself would not remember, it would lie buried under this enchantment, unwakable because it had never gone to sleep; nor would the Greeks remember Troy. . . . She would go to Diomedes; with him she could remember Troy. . . . Let it be shame; the shame, called after her, would be a means of memory. . . . More and more different from its earlier guises would grow the world. But Troy would remain Troy in the depths of the mirror of self-resemblance, the haunting unification of what had been with what was to be."

All this is arbitrary, both as history and as morals; we do not know what Miss Riding means, either as to Troy or as to ourselves. At its center, therefore, the book is vague. But its surface is frequently very fine. The conversation is brainy, the mythology is unconventional, the wrenching of legend (usually to avoid drama) is ingenious, and the summaries of certain characters (notably Pandarus and Thersites) are witty beyond the power of most living novelists. So that if the whole is still one of Miss Riding's secrets, many of the parts await our active pleasure.

MARK VAN DOREN

F. W. P. Homework

AMERICAN STUFF: An Anthology of Prose and Verse by Members of the Federal Writers' Project, with Sixteen Prints by the Federal Art Project. The Viking Press. $3.

THE immediate work of the Federal Writers' Project, as Henry P. Alsberg tactfully explains in his foreword, was to write, assemble, and edit guidebooks of the different localities in which the project was organized. Some of the more able and fortunate among the hundreds employed contributed the better portion of their work in leisure time to theatrical agents on Broadway or to editors of magazines, newspapers, and publishing houses. The present miscellany contains writing that fell between the two possibilities; it could neither be used in the publications of the Writers' Project nor be sold elsewhere.

The character of the prose in "American Stuff" seems curiously outmoded, as though journalistic realism had already exhausted its vitality in the work of Theodore Dreiser, Sinclair Lewis, and James T. Farrell. Much of it is repetitious and therefore dull, using the clichés of what Mr. Alsberg calls "the American here-and-now." It should be remembered here and now, as well as always, that the superficial devices of dialect and the "true-life" confessional are seldom valuable, and the material from which they stem is of historical use only if arranged and edited by such brilliant technicians in social criticism as Helen and Robert Lynd.

Many of the short stories and semi-autobiographical sketches in this collection are inept examples of a style that has been called acceptable by popular magazines. This fact, rather than the subject matter characteristic of a depression period, makes them rather heavy reading. The best things in the book are Nathan Asch's "Heart's Desire," Leon Dorais's "Mama, the Man Is Standing There," and two legends, "The Legend of Sharon" and "Lookin' fer Three Fools," reported by Francis R. Cole and Luther Clark, respectively. In these four pieces there is an obvious effort, though one not uniformly successful, to penetrate the surfaces of human consciousness and to give meaning to its expression. In the latter legend one sees clearly enough the rich material out of which Erskine Caldwell created his short stories and novels; and here again it waits for the creative imagination to give it form and meaning.

The verse in this collection has of course the same limitations as its prose; the few exceptions are in the work of Vincent McHugh, A. T. Rosen, and Lionel Abel, and in the remarkable Negro spiritual, the twenty-first recorded by the South Carolina Project Workers of Effingham. Again, something of the same blight of gloomy and uninspired repetition falls upon the work of the sixteen graphic artists whose prints illustrate this book. But in justice to the artists it should be said that all achieve a level of competence that is only sporadically attained by the fifty or more writers. There is of course no mystery behind this general improvement; because of the vast amount of work done under the direction of the various art projects throughout the country, it was easier to exercise editorial discrimination, and it should also be remembered that those who were unemployed, in this field, received technical training.

In all fairness it must be said that the present volume does not pretend to definitiveness in its selection, nor does it represent the total achievement of its better-known contributors. It must be regarded as a first step toward recognizing the responsibility of a civilization to its writers. The principle which actuated the Federal Writers' Project is sound and clear; even in the fragments of work contributed by John A. Lomax, who is the National Folklore Adviser, one direction of its usefulness is clearly visible. The other direction is already established by the forthcoming publication of the project's guidebooks. But the production of a creative literature involves aesthetic and cultural problems that cannot be solved within a short time period by any federal administration. It is to be hoped that permanent federal employment agencies will be established after existing projects have been completed. Those who cannot live by their writing alone should be given every opportunity for further research in American folklore or to find means of employment other than hack work.

HORACE GREGORY

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Shorter Notices

A. E. HOUSMAN: A SKETCH. Together with a List of His Writings and Indexes to His Classical Papers. By A. S. F. Gow. The Macmillan Company. $1.75.

ALTHOUGH this sketch of Housman has to do chiefly with the poet's scholarly work, one gleans from it a number of facts about Housman's character. He was a perfectionist, always in a state of anxiety about the absolute accuracy of any work published. He achieved little fame as a student at the university, and in consequence for ten years afterward remained a clerk in the Patent Office. He began at this time his scholarly writings, as a result of which he was granted the chair in Latin first at University College and then, in 1910, at Cambridge. A harsh and witty critic of his fellow-scholars' performances, he made many enemies. His one ambition was to leave behind him a name, and as Gow says, this was always in conflict "not only with his mistrust of any human judgment and with the doubt whether there would be any long posterity for classical studies, but more fundamentally with his view of life as a 'long fool's errand to the grave.'" Housman's was a solitary life; one lifelong friendship with a fellow-clerk and student, Jackson, is the only intimate companionship we know of his enjoying. And since Jackson lived all his mature years in India, this did not continue save in feeling. Precise, completely punctual, impersonal always in the classroom, Housman was nevertheless welcome with students who knew the "Shropshire Lad."

EDA LOU WALTON

RUN AROUND. By Benjamin Appel. E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

Benjamin Appel sets his story in New York's West Side and exposes particularly the political shifts and opportunism of clubhouse bosses. Danny Englander's need of a job gets him involved as a flunkey vote-snatcher for one of the party machines. The confusion, the degradation of spirit, the rebellion and apathy which hundreds of men like Danny Englander endure in the slender hope of finding a job are an appalling comment on the "American dream" of life, liberty, and happiness. Mr. Appel reproduces the present scene with knowledge and force. The implications of the struggle between capital and labor, and the specific effects of the W.P.A. upon the spirit of men who are clamoring for the right to live like human beings are disturbingly presented. The vernacular and the tempo of the writing are as contemporary as today's newspaper.

STANLEY YOUNG

WORDS: ENGLISH ROOTS AND HOW THEY GROW. By Margaret S. Ernst. Alfred A. Knopf. $1.20.

In theory the whole art of the teacher may be reduced to knowledge of (1) her pupil, (2) her subject, (3) how to coordinate the two, but the practical difficulty of coordinating youngsters of junior-high-school age or younger with the bewildering and tedious irregularities of English orthography cannot always be overcome with the use of the ordinary spelling book. Mrs. Ernst, expert in the methods of the progressive educator, believes that children will learn to spell if they become interested in words as fragments of cultural history. Understanding of children and enthusiasm for her subject radiate from the pages of her well-devised little book. From it no healthy child could escape learning not only to spell but to take an active interest in his use of words.

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FILMS

A Dedicated Intellect

A SPECIALTY in good standing among Soviet scenarists has been the parable of conversion, in which irreconcilables (gipsies, mujiks, intellectuals) submit, at long length and after many and varied ordeals, to the communal discipline. "Baltic Deputy" (Amkino) might easily have repeated the stereotype but acquires stature of its own precisely because it begins where such products leave off. It must be added that history is in a large measure responsible for clearing the smoke of battle from the camera lenses here. The film makes use of authentic incidents in the life of the Russian scientist Klement Timiriazev, who in his seventy-fifth year so completely earned the admiration of the rank and file by his support of Bolshevist revolt that he was elected delegate to the Leningrad Soviet by the Baltic sailors.

Full responsibility for the picture's peculiar impressiveness and charm devolves upon Nikolai Cherkassov in the role of the militant old scientist, who studiously deflects the crotchets assigned to him, time and again, by the scenarist, and with extraordinary tact understates his way to a portrait that is hearty, homely, and rooted in informed tenderness. He has been compelled, in general, to set into motion situations devoid of palpable excitements: he enters the lecture-room and is denounced by his pupils; a young disciple hurls at his feet the manuscript of a tract upon which they have labored together for many years, and he kneels to retrieve it page by page; he gives a birthday party which is attended only by a drunken porter who mumbles an obsequious greeting, pockets a *pourboire,* and stumbles downstairs; he is plied with the awed attentions of a Baltic sailor (excellently played in blunt, Chapayev fashion), whose capital aside "He was the friend of Newton" deserves mention here as an instance of comradely tribute. In every case Cherkassov, working hand in hand with the camera, manages to translate the gist of a situation into a shrug of the shoulder or a birdlike jerk of the head, and at one and the same time invites and repels a sentimental effect in a way that disarms censure completely. Thus, he is able to accompany his wife in a duet played to the empty chairs and deserted dinner table in a darkened drawing-room, when it has become plain that the party guests will not arrive. Tension builds and hangs in the balance, until, springing suddenly toward an electric switch, he floods the room with light and archly disinfects the mood with a melody in march time.

Credit for such moments must unquestionably be shared with the directors, Alexander Zarkhi and Josef Heifetz, who keep the camera moving with easy plasticity and only occasionally digress to underscore the moral of the piece in unduly propagandic boldface. The closing scenes, wherein Cherkassov's moving address to the Leningrad Soviet is tiresomely marred by marching masses, letters from Lenin, farewells, and heroic statuary, are particularly unfortunate. Even here, however, the directors are to be thanked for rejecting a possible deathbed session with the ailing hero, and concluding by the happiest device possible—with a receding long shot of a bent figure stooped over his books on the summit of a small stepladder, flicking the pages intently, and turning a dedicated intellect outward.

BEN BELITT

RECORDS

THE harpsichord sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti vary of course, but the best of them are among the most delightful and lovely music ever written; and some of the best, along with some that are less interesting, have been recorded for Columbia by Yella Pessl (six ten-inch records, $6). This is not the first set of its kind: a volume of recording by Wanda Landowska was issued by subscription some time ago. But it is the first set released for general distribution, and thirteen of the fourteen sonatas are, we are told, recorded for the first time. Not having heard the Landowska records I cannot make comparative judgments, but can only say that Miss Pessl's performances have the dexterity, clarity, color, and spirit that the music calls for, and are well recorded.

No. 595 in Köchel's catalogue of Mozart's works is the wonderful Piano Concerto in B flat recorded by Schnabel; and we would therefore expect the String Quartet K 590 also to be wonderful. But one cannot go by numbers and dates with Mozart; the quality of the work depends on whether it was just a job or whether heart and inspiration were in it. They were in the Piano Concerto K 271 that I discussed a few weeks ago; they were obviously—to everyone but the blurb-writer for Columbia's set—not in the perfunctory and feeble Quartet K 590. The performance by the Stradivarius String Quartet and the recording are both good (three twelve-inch records, $5).

What the music of three and four centuries ago would mean to us if we could hear it as it sounded in the performances of its own time we cannot know; we can know only the effect on us of the altered sound of performances today; and this effect varies. Some old music—works of Byrd, Victoria, Purcell—I have found moving, exciting, beautiful at first hearing, but not Palestrina's Missa Brevis as recorded by the Madrigal Singers under the direction of Lehman Engel (Columbia: three twelve-inch records, $5). Repetition, study may reveal more; and those who study may find Mr. Engel's accompanying notes inadequate. If, for example, one wants the listener to appreciate Palestrina's musical treatment of the words, it is not enough merely to refer to an example or two; one must do what Mr. Engel does not do: direct the listener to the places on the records where the actual sound of the treatment of certain words can be heard. That, at least, if one sets out to do an educational job, and this work, which is so far removed from most people's musical experience, is one that calls for an educational job.

On two records, one twelve-inch and one ten-inch ($1.50 and $1), Columbia has issued Gieseking's performance, wrought with his usual incredible perfection, of Debussy's "Children's Corner." It has relisted the record ($1) of several strange Rumanian folk dances played in his unfailing superb style by Szigeti, with Bartok at the piano. Also, it has issued a fine new recording of Gaubert's excellent performance of Dukas's "Sorcerer's Apprentice" with the Paris Conservatory Orchestra (two records, $3); and has done the same for Beecham's richly colored performance of Delius's "Summer Night on a River" with the London Philharmonic (one record, $1). On another single ($1.50) "With Verdure Clad," from Haydn's "Creation," and Bishop's charming setting of Shakespeare's "Should He Upbraid" are sung beautifully by Dora Labette.

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

Mr. Ickes Suspects

Dear Sirs: Last evening I read a self-serving and therefore necessarily highly laudatory advertisement by and of *The Nation*. It ran: "They [its readers] find that *The Nation* accepts the challenge of the intelligent minority to disclose the facts behind the news and to interpret them authoritatively from the progressive point of view." This sounded better than fine. Indeed, it gave me quite a glow, because I am one of the readers of *The Nation* myself and I was momentarily happy in this bold admission that you "disclose the facts behind the news" and "interpret them authoritatively from the progressive point of view."

Whereupon I opened a recent issue in full confidence that I was about to have some first-class, authoritative interpretation of the facts behind the news—only to read another attack on the Housing Division of the Public Works Administration. The Logan amendment, said you —authoritatively and from the progressive point of view interpreting the facts behind the news — which places the housing administration under the Wagner bill in the Department of the Interior, "would seem to assure, in view of the department's record in recent years, that no houses will be built for many months to come."

It has been the policy of *The Nation* for two or three years not only to belittle but to misrepresent the facts with reference to what has been accomplished under PWA. I have invited an investigation on your part. I really would like you to know the facts, but you don't seem to want to know them. It appears to be a cherished habit of a "liberal" editor not to mess up with common, mundane facts. The rarefied air of Mt. Olympus seems to supply a medium through which one can see such facts as happen to suit one's purpose.

I haven't any doubt that the editors of *The Nation* could have done a much better job if they had undertaken the task of inaugurating a housing program. And yet I doubt whether even such gifted persons could have made a success of housing if they had accepted the facts and followed the advice that seem to be influential with them in determining their editorial policy toward housing.

I don't want to think the editors of *The Nation* are merely voicing the prejudices of that small and futile group in New York which PWA made the mistake of relying upon in its housing program at the beginning—a mistake the cost of which we have been paying ever since. And yet I suspect that clever and wise as they are, the editors of *The Nation* choose to be misled on housing by two small but persistent groups: first, those who were given carte blanche with respect to housing by PWA until a catastrophic failure threatened and resignations and separations were necessary in order to save anything of the program; and, second, those whose chief interest in the Wagner housing bill was in creating an administrative jungle that would provide jobs for them even if it was cumbersome, ineffective, and costly.

In short, I strongly suspect that the editorial in the recent issue of *The Nation* expresses the disappointment of those who have lost jobs as well as of those who hoped for jobs.

HAROLD L. ICKES

Washington, August 21

Catholic Layman on Spain

Dear Sirs: It seems to me that the position of the average American Catholic toward the Spanish civil war has been to a large extent misrepresented to the American public by the press, both liberal and conservative. Letters to the editors of *The Nation* have displayed an appalling lack of understanding of the Catholic layman's viewpoint. In a country as traditionally Roman Catholic as Spain we have witnessed a transition from a love of the church and all things of religion to a stinging hate as all-embracing as was the original love. This profound change has occurred particularly among the workers. Why? Does it seem plausible, as some of our church's hierarchy would have us believe, that the big, bad Russian "reds" have overnight so completely overthrown the ancestral religion of ages past? We, the American laity, think not. Rather we are inclined to believe that the smug indifference of the state-supported clergy to the exploitation of the workers of Spain has led to this mass antipathy to the church. And the same is true in Mexico.

Despite efforts to arouse the American Catholic to an enthusiastic support of the rebel cause, he has remained as a whole unconvinced. We find it difficult to believe that Hitler is honestly the "Defender of the Faith" in his support of General Franco. He carries the swastika instead of the true cross. In accord with millions of other American Catholics I cannot in conscience find a semblance of justice in the rebel cause!

FRANCIS KANE FENDT

West Philadelphia, Pa., September 2

How to Make Girdler Sign

Dear Sirs: Tom Girdler says that no law compels him to sign a union-recognition acknowledgment. If he refers solely to the Wagner Act his accuracy is questionable, but when he includes all laws he is definitely wrong; he completely overlooks Section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission Act. Rulings under this law stipulate three conditions that must be present before the commission may order a trade practice stopped: the practice must be one used in interstate commerce; the practice must be unfair to competitors; the public must be interested in having the practice cease. All three are present in the case of Tom Girdler.

As the first condition, decisions in the Wagner Act cases clearly make the labor practices of recalcitrant companies matters of interstate commerce. Concerning unfairness to competitors, it is plain, even construing the Wagner Act narrowly, that collective bargaining through union representatives is an employee's right, and that those steel companies which have recognized this by signing are following the ethical practice. Those employers who prevent effective collective bargaining by not signing will be able to pay lower wages or work their men longer hours than their signed-up competitors; hence they can keep their cost of production lower and either undersell their competitors or make more profit. The only recourse of the firm that has signed up is to refuse to renew a union agreement when it expires or to break it immediately. According to the opinion of Supreme Court Justice Stone in Federal Trade Commission *vs.* Keppel and Brothers, "A method of competition which casts upon one's competitors the burden of the loss

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of business unless they will descend to a practice which they are under a powerful moral compulsion not to adopt, even though it is not criminal, was thought to involve the kinds of unfairness at which the statute [the Trade Commission Act] was aimed.

The third condition laid down by the commission is hardly to be questioned in the case of Republic Steel. The public certainly has an interest in preventing the murder, bloodshed, pay-roll loss, and other evils resulting from the strikes which have been the consequence of Girdler's obstinate refusal to sign.

As for the contention that it is unconstitutional for courts to order people to affix their signatures to documents, it is sufficient to call attention to the age-old practice of equity courts by which people are compelled to sign grants of property to others equitably entitled to it. In the interest of the public, in the interest of the steel workers, and out of fairness to those steel companies which have signed, the Federal Trade Commission should act. The law requires Tom Girdler to sign.

CHARLES N. HOFFMAN

Washington, August 15

Where Credit Is Due

Dear Sirs: Miss Eda Lou Walton, reviewing "And Spain Sings" in the August 28 issue of *The Nation*, has been more than generous to me, but she has correspondingly tended to slight the part played by my colleague. M. J. Benardete laid all the groundwork of this book; he procured the original material from the files of *El Mono Azul* (not from several popular magazines, as Miss Walton indicates), and his literal and rhythmical English prose statement of 90 per cent of the text formed the basis on which the American adapters worked. Moreover, Mr. Benardete's introduction to the book should by no means escape the notice of the careful reviewer. ROLFE HUMPHRIES

Belvidere, N. J., September 1

"Epius" Emerges

Dear Sirs: In my recent travels through the Far West my attention has been attracted to the new "Epius" movement. This movement, led by Arthur W. Watwood of Winner, South Dakota, has for its motto, "End Poverty in the United States," and "Epius" clubs are being formed by the People's Democratic League, of which Watwood, former Democratic candidate for Congressman, is president.

The "Epius" program goes farther than did Upton Sinclair's "Epic" platform. It advocates public ownership of banks and utilities, a moratorium on farm mortgages, monthly old-age pensions of at least $50, maternity and disability insurance, and direct election of Supreme Court judges. Watwood and several other speakers have been conducting a whirlwind tour of South Dakota, speaking in almost every town and city. The papers give "Epius" considerable space and take it seriously. I heard Watwood speak several times. He is a man of force, evidently very sincere, and well informed in economics.

It looks as if something has been started in South Dakota that may parallel the old Nonpartisan League in strength. Watwood, while counting on the support of most of his liberal Democratic colleagues, will evidently be backed in his fight by many progressive Republicans, as well as the old veterans of the Nonpartisan League and the Socialist Party. THEODORE A. JOHNSON

Pensacola, Fla., August 9

CONTRIBUTORS

M. E. RAVAGE, *The Nation's* regular correspondent in France, recently returned to Paris after an intensive first-hand study of Central Europe and the Balkans.

MAXWELL STEWART lived in China for six years and has closely followed the course of Sino-Japanese relations.

JOEL SEIDMAN is on leave from Brookwood Labor College to work with the Education Department of the United Automobile Workers of America.

DERO A. SAUNDERS, a Southerner and a student of Southern problems, has worked as apprentice machinist for the Rust Cotton Picker Company.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS is a practicing physician as well as a distinguished poet and novelist.

W. H. HOBBS, author of a biography of Peary, has led his own expedition to Greenland.

ROSE M. STEIN is the author of "M-Day," a study of war-mobilization plans in America.

HARRY LEVIN is a member of the Society of Fellows at Harvard University.

SIDNEY HOOK, chairman of the Department of Philosophy of New York University, is the author of several books on Marxist theory.

HORACE GREGORY will soon publish a study of the traditions behind modern literature entitled "Makers and Ancestors."

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACTS OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AND MARCH 3, 1933.

Of *The Nation*, published weekly at New York, N. Y., for September 11, 1937.

STATE OF NEW YORK } ss.:
COUNTY OF NEW YORK }

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Hugo Van Arx, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the business manager of *The Nation*, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in Section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publisher, The Nation, Inc., 20 Vesey Street, New York, N. Y.; Editors, Freda Kirchwey, 20 Vesey Street, New York, N. Y.; Max Lerner, 20 Vesey Street, New York, N. Y.; Business Manager, Hugo Van Arx, 20 Vesey Street, New York, N. Y.

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholder owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member must be given.) The Nation, Inc., 20 Vesey Street, New York, N. Y.; Freda Kirchwey, 20 Vesey Street, New York, N. Y.

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5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the twelve months preceding the date shown above is. (This information is required from daily publications only.) HUGO VAN ARX
Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 11th day of September, 1937. TERESITA GRANT.

(My commission expires March 30, 1939.)
(Seal)

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